

# Femme Fatales

January 14

\$5.95  
SAM RILEY  
MARK LEE

ASIA ARGENTO  
FAMKE JANSSEN  
TIA CARRERE  
"RELIQUE HUNTER"  
SEXY HORROR  
FULL MOON'S  
"THE DEAD HATE  
THE LIVING"

The ALIEN star is  
heading back into  
outer space as a TV  
glamour puss,  
spooling STAR TREK

Volume 8 Number 10



## SIGOURNEY WEAVER GALAXY QUEST



# Femme Fatales

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VOLUME 8 NUMBER 10

The Lascious Ladies of Horror, Fantasy & Science Fiction

JANUARY 14, 2000

**Happy Holidays.** Here's a little behind-the-scenes poop the press on page 41—photographed by Denise Duff—was originally selected as this issue's front cover. But after we "unveiled" this photo to relatives, all hell broke loose. Flip to that page and draw your own conclusions about the censorial beehives. Personally, I thought it was an auspicious introduction to actress FF staffer Sara Barrett, who posed for the shot. But some distributors branded this prelude to Barrett as a bit too provocative. What's your opinion? Barrett should take solace in she who was replaced by the saucous sci-fi icon Sigourney Weaver—not exactly chopped liver.

Crying for comedy, Ms. Weaver researched her role as *GALAXY QUEST*'s semi-naïf starlet. But what a starlet! A generic definition is a youthful beauty who coos or struggles on sex appeal for an itchyometry jump-start to stardom. We invited three celeste ingenues to chronicle their real life experiences: Griffin Drew, Sita Thompson and Amber Newman. Who will survive?

Welcome back Asia Argento, our choice as the millennium's #1 pioneering filmmaker. This issue's preview of Argento will expand, later next year, into another cover story. She's a threat, L.A. pathology—run for your lives!

We couldn't resist coverage of *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING*, with its 50s flair for zombie movies and cheap thrills, the scenario sort of necromancy to the pre-80s Altoids Altoids pickups (most notably *FRANKENSTEIN 1970*). Full Moon, the production company, effects than output adequate budgets but their scripts are either unimaginative rip-offs or continuances for another boy franchise. (Mean, canon, *CURSE OF THE PUPPETMASTER* is a virtual remake of 1987's *SEEDS* and *SEEDS/PEOPLE* was coined from *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS*. *TOTEM* owes a couple of reeks to *THE EVIL DEAD*.) Let's hope that *DEAD LIVING* is an open window for fresh air. Our suggestion for a Full Moon (boy) action figure: enough with the herbals, how about Denise Duff's "Vichelle" character from the *SUBSPECIES* series?

Bill George



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# ASIA ARGENTO

## ITALY'S RACY REBEL COMBINES GRAPHIC SEX & FANTASY IN HER DIRECTING DEBUT.

By Alan Jones

Italy's premier sex symbol/actress Asia Argento makes her directing/screenwriting debut in *SCARLET DIVA*, which is currently shooting in Rome. The 24-year-old star of *NEW ROSE HOTEL*, *B. MONKEY* and three horror movies helmed by her father, Dario Argento, also stars in the semi-nudographic movie which she describes as "a merciless romance."

The erotic odyssey, shot on a \$1 million budget, focuses on the crazed events in the life of fictional superstar Anna Battista: public appearances to plug her latest release, award ceremonies, screen testing for American summer blockbusters and avoiding the paparazzi. But while Anna's public persona is *La Dolce Vita*, her personal life is chaotic. She's locked within an emotional vortex of sexual antipathy, drug abuse, self-destruction and disillusionment with the rock star lover who leaves her pregnant.

After years of learning her craft in award-winning continental hits (*CLOSE FRIENDS*, *LA REINE MARGOT*), Argento opted to abandon the limelight and take a stab at directing. Encouraged by her father as well as Abel Ferrara (director of the aforementioned *NEW ROSE HOTEL*), she was originally slated to helm a "science fiction/horror movie" titled *FACELESS*. "It was about two soldiers who return from a future war completely mutilated, and how one woman must choose which of them was really her husband," recalls Argento. "It

was a good idea and I toyed with it for ages. But I finally decided not to go ahead because it wasn't really me. *SCARLET DIVA* seemed far more appropriate as I know the world that Anna Battista exists in—and I can put it across successfully on screen."

Argento hopes that the script's blurring of fact and fiction will afford audiences a latitude for guessing what's fact (i.e. drawn from her personal life) and fantasy. Anna's father is a popular horror director, her mother is a has-been, heroin-addicted actress. Anna's just wrapped a film titled *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* (Ms. Argento recently appeared in her father's revisionist spin on *PHANTOM* Anna's genitalia is illustrated with an oversized tattoo). And one "Barry Paar," owner of an Oscar-winning American independent production company, insists upon oral sex in return for hacking Anna's next picture. "A lot of what I've written may be true," says Argento, "I'm not saying what But the real point of *SCARLET*



Asia Argento is "a control freak. I'm sick of being offered decorative parts in trashy movies because there is so very much more to me than my image."

*DIVA* is that it's one woman's journey to discover her capacity for love in a world of exploitation and cold, calculated sex. The sex scenes are going to be the strongest ones ever filmed, nearly pornographic. But there's a lot to say emotionally in the story, so I want them to have the biggest impact they possibly can."

The supporting cast includes Argento's mother, Daria Nicolodi, an actress who was often featured in the films of ex-husband Dario Argento (including *OPERA*, *DEEP RED*, *INFERNO*, *PHENOMENA*, *TENEbrae*, et al.).

"I wrote the screenplay, I'm starring and I'm directing," grins Argento. "I'm nervous, sure, but I'm a control freak and it's a move in my career I really want to make. I'm sick of being offered decorative parts in trashy movies because there is so much more to me than my image. There's over 50 speaking parts in *SCARLET DIVA* so it's a daunting undertaking." Its sexuality notwithstanding, the movie remains all in the family: Claudio Argento, the screenwriter/director/star's uncle, serves as executive producer. □

Dario Argento helmed *Julius Caesar* & his offspring (Asia Argento) in *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA*. "My heroine was so poor, she knew nothing about life."



# F A T A L E

By DAN SCAPPEROTTI

■ Winona Ryder has functioned as star and executive producer of Columbia Pictures' *GIRL, INTERRUPTED*. Based upon Susanne Kaysen's autobiographical book, the film—set in the turbulent '60s—chronicles the life of a troubled 17-year-old Kaysen: after an aborted crack at suicide, she was whisked to a mental institution for a prescribed "short rest." Her incarceration, however, stretched to two years. Ryder plays the confused writer who documented the madness that percolated from within the asylum as well as the "crazed" world outside. The almost all-female cast—including Angelina Jolie (as "Lisa the sociopath"), Whoopi Goldberg and Vanessa Redgrave—worked in an abandoned wing of a Pennsylvania mental hospital.

■ Lee Devere is guest starring in *The Squared Circle*, a third-season episode of *EARTH: THE FINAL CONFLICT*. Devere plays Aspasia Frost, a "Salem-like" gynecologist created by the Twelvors. "She was a 75-year-old woman who was given another chance at life by being offered this new DNA-enhanced body," explains Devere. "She became a test subject to see if they can become super-soldiers in the future for the U.S. Army. They are called Padar Warriors." The pageantry is set in a massive stadium. "They've built this incredible ring. It's like a sphere which opens. If you fall out of this sphere when you're fighting, you go into non-gravity and you die if there is no safety net." But Frost's popularity threatens to expose the Twelvors' defense technology: "The Twelvors think that I've gotten too good and I become a celebrity in Washington and the States. So in the final scene, I get attacked by some other Padar warriors when there isn't any safety device."

Devere is quite dead at the opening of *MERCY*, a 2003 release starring Ellen Barkin and Pets Wilson (*LA FEMME NIKITA*). "I play Dorothy Sarsacot, a very successful business woman," notes Devere. "But flashback scenes reveal the other side of my life: I participate in an underground world of lesbian S&M. Dorothy appears fine on the surface but she goes with men; she goes with women, never been married, extremely wealthy and a control freak who is way out of control. I befriended Vicki [Wilson], a very disturbed young girl, who becomes my lover and I become her mentor. She



Winona Ryder and Angelina Jolie in *GIRL, INTERRUPTED*. Directed by James Mangold (OPP. LAIR), the cast also includes *THE FACULTY*'s Gina Bellman.

comes from nothing and wants to emulate me and begins dressing like me. When five of the women from this bizarre world begin showing up dead in these S&M dungeons—each with similar makeup on their faces and in the same position of a bed—Ellen Barkin is put in charge of the investigation."

■ *FTV* centerfold and cover girl Tanya McClure plays "ex-Playmate" Bunny Caldwell on the Fox series, *MANCHESTER PREP*, a spin-off of the Sarah Michelle Gellar vehicle, *CRUEL INTENTIONS*. The title institution is a New York preparatory high school where the kids are extremely wealthy," said McClure. "The series is produced and directed by the people who made *Scandal's* feature film, Roger Kumble, the original film's director, is executive producer on the series. He's a great guy. It's an hour drama but has a comedy edge for sure."

"I'm bubbly, a little bit over the top, not like the original movie character. My character is different from the one played by Christine Baranski. Keri Lynn Pratt plays my daughter, Castle Caldwell, who's the central character on the show."

While the program focuses on the school's teen elite, the producers have cast post-adolescent actors for crossover appeal. "I have that term 'older generation,'" said McClure. Amy Adams is cast as Kathryn Merkut, the virgin played by Guillar in the feature film. When George's father donates a large amount of cash to the school in the first episode, the trustees vote to christen the new building the Bunny Caldwell Library. This infuriates Tiffney Merkut (Mimi Rogers) who,

as head of the fund raising committee, had hoped to keep the honor. It's the birth of a family feud. "It's a really funny and cute show that I'm excited about," said McClure. "Mira Sorvino is just great. She plays the bad queen."

■ Get over it: the syndicated *HERCULES* series has bitten the dust. USA Studios has produced *CLEOPATRA* 2525, a mid-season replacement starring Gina Torres, Jennifer Sky and Victoria Pratt, all alumnae of *XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS*. The show will premiere as a half-hour weekly series. Produced by Rob Tapert and Sam Raimi's Renaissance Pictures, the series is set two centuries in the future: evil robots rule and humans survive in Earth's subterranean caverns. The aforementioned three beautiful women—tough as nails, of course—seek to subvert the racist, technocrats. Ms. Torres is cast as Hel, a hardened warrior and ritual leader. Her sidekick, Sarge, is played by Pratt, a Canadian track and field champion. While dodging killer robots, they're introduced to resistant fighter Cleopatra (played by Sky), described as "an amazing actress and part-time exotic dancer who was cryogenically frozen in the year 2001 after slipping into a coma during cosmetic surgery." She awakens five hundred years later in an organ harvesting lab. Hel and Sarge tutor Cleopatra with mutual anti-banning: the ex-slave reciprocates by offering tips on breast implants and lip gloss.

Sky will also recurrently appear in the new season of *XENA* as Amheron, a young warrior. She debuted as the character in last season's final two episodes.

■ Brides are in fashion this season. *Brickshaw Toys*, as part of their Universal Monsters collection, released a beautifully detailed action figure of Elsa Lanchester as the legendary Bride of Frankenstein (equally impressive replicas of the Phantom of the Opera and the Creature from the Black Lagoon are also available). Universal Home Video conveniently released James Whale's *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1935) on DVD which includes a documentary on the film narrated by Jon Voight, a running audio commentary by Scott McQueen, a still photo montage and the original trailer. McFarland Toys celebrates a more contemporary couple with a board set of six inch "Chucky and Tiffany" figures from *BRIDE OF CHUCKY*.

■ The latest *BLAIR WITCH* brouhaha? This week it's *THE RARE WENCH PROJECT*, which—in truth—is something about a B-film direc-

tor with Pets Wilson and Ellen Barkin down to *EARTH: FINAL CONFLICT*.





The ladies of THE BARE WENCH PROJECT. Nikki Fritz, Julie Strain (in the title role) and Julie Smith. Blame/battleaxe director Andy Sturz performs a cameo.

or dispatching his curvy cast into the wilderness. "Tim Heather Donahue's character, the lead," says erotic thriller diva Julie Strain, "instead of one gal and two guys there are four hot babes, what with Nikki Fritz, Antonia Dorsey, Lorressa McCormick and me." The bombshell who performed the title role never left home. "Julie Strain does a guest appearance as the Bare Wench," Smith explains. "All of her footage was actually shot in her own back yard." The plot? After studying the Bare Wench legend for six months, four students seek out the mysterious-ette. "We were out in rustic regions for two days and three nights," recalls Smith. "This movie had to be finished within two weeks, that includes editing and everything. And we did it. It's a parody Word-for-word, every detail is the same. The only thing different is that, in our project, there are no men and lots of tits which makes it a hell of a lot more fun to look at. Instead of the stock figures in the trees, we have sex blow up dolls and the phallos of rocks become enormous titans." And what was the cast's collective motivation for (parodying) the film's director popping their tops? "It just happens," shrugs Smith. "You get a little hot and you want to take your top off. It just happens naturally."

which makes it even more beautiful because it's unwatched."

The actresses camped out the whole time, literally babes in the woods. "The second night was scary and pitch black," says Smith. "The only light out there beside our cameras were our flashlights. Just before we did the monologue scene that I do in this tent, we heard something. We looked out and in the tall, about 35 feet out, we see the blonde head of a ten year old

Direct-to-video diva Debbie Dutch (SORORITY GIRLS & THE CREATURE FROM HELL) poses for Possessive, Three Stooges rock "homage-to-horror" CD.



lad pop up. Now that really scared the shit out of us. We kept filming but we were convinced that there were other people out there watching us. Sure enough, there were. We started doing another take and up popped another lad that was hiding behind a tree. How these kids got out there in the middle of nowhere, in this field with thicker bushes and timberweds, we haven't a clue."

While wrapping-up this issue, I heard that Jerry Pfeffer, owner of the WITCHCRAFT franchise, is producing a BLAIR WITCH knock-off called THE BELAIR BITCH. Trisha Borsari (CAGED HEARTS) plays the title role. Enough already with BLAIR WITCH, okay?

• Hammer 'em icon Brinke Stevens has sampled another medium, along with a coterie of femmes, she'll appear on the packaging of Possessive, a rock CD from Three Stooges. DemiLea LaVey had been singing "Thunderstruck" metal stuff for years and was determined to branch out. To keep busy, he wrote the title song for the CD. Several new tunes followed including PHANTASM homage, Lord of the Dead. It seems a few weeks before PHANTASM IV was scheduled for release, a friend acquainted LaVey with the franchise's star, Reggie Barstow. "Tim's fan of the whole PHANTASM series," says LaVey. "I love horror movies. My personal favorites are PHANTASM and HELLRAISER." At first, Barstow was "cool toward the project," but LaVey persisted. "It brought Possessive with me to the party where they were showing PHANTASM IV and I played it for him. He liked it so much that I wrote a verse for him about his own character. It's cool because chicks dance to it." Barstow sings a bridge of sixteen lines. When it came time to develop

a sleeve for the CD, LaVey called on some of his buds to pose for a photo session. Among them: Brinke Stevens, Debbie Dutch and pornstar Sheena. "Those are all girls that I know. So I asked them if they'd like to be on the CD with me because I thought it would be cool and would draw attention to the disc. Brinke's great. She's just a beautiful woman. This project has taken on a life of its own. I got the girls and I met Reggie Barstow who is one of the nice people I've ever met." LaVey has his own website at [www.threestooges.com](http://www.threestooges.com) which features sound clips and pictures of the women from his cover shoot.

• Moore Creations has signed a pact with Heme Comics to produce a line of Vampiella merchandise, which will include sun globes, action figures and a bust of the Drakon native. First to hit store shelves is a sumptuously detailed 14 inch cold cast porcelain statue. Chief honcho on the project is Cleburne Moore. "Vampiella is a true comic female icon," Moore told FF. "She is also relevant and popular today. You may not know that the first character I ever sculpted in this industry is Vampiella, so, for me, it's a natural return to my roots. From the first Frazer painting from Vampiella #1 in the 60's, I have had an attraction to the look and feel of the character. The commercial potential is excellent and I'm glad that Heme wanted us to have these licenses." The usual market for Moore products has been the high end, but a couple of years ago he applied his detailed sculpting skills to action figures. "We're releasing a Salsuna Sagitta full statue of Vampiella, which was sculpted some time ago, but was never released in anything approaching a broad sense. I will sculpt the action figure, a bust and later another full statue. Mensel Carrasco and I designed a sun globe and I will art direct and possibly sculpt part of that with another sculptor."

Last year, Moore released a bust statue of Xena, Warrior Princess. "We're also planning for a Vampiella bust, which will be there or less like the Xena piece," he said. "It may be a bust of two smaller. I'd like to bring the retail price down, then standardize a series of comic female 'busts' including Winxblade, Draculblade and others. It gives the collection a nice affordable statistic and is a good opportunity for us to do some beautiful face studies, something I enjoy."

• Seduction Cinema, a subsidiary of New Jersey indie E.I. Cinema, recently wrapped GIRL EXPLORES GIRL: THE ALIEN ENCOUNTER. Too subtle for you?



The *Vampiress* model, sculpted by Moon Creations. The must-have-thing of the comic book issue will include a snow globe, statue figure & a book. "The commercial potential is great."

Okay, the film resonates with a mothball that recurrently fuels low-budget, sci-fi quirkies (*MARS NEEDS WOMEN, FEMALEN*) irresistible of repression, an eroding piérot's populace dispatches a couple of emissaries on a mission. "They come to Earth to try and discover human sexuality," says director John Bechus, who also helmed *VAMPIRE SEDUCTION*. "The female star, played by Florida actress Katie Keene, discovers that she's a lesbian. Damon Game, who also plays a leading role, was totally uninhibited on the set. Very free with her body. She has her own web site and is very much into herself and gotten."

Among Seduction Cinema's 2006 releases is—oh, no!—*THE EROTIC WITCH* project?? Okay, that's it for me—I'm outta here. □

L: *AN ALIEN SEDUCTION* incites Victoria Vega & Damon Game to indulge in sapphism and sci-fi. The director notes, "Vega, a N.Y. dancer/dancer, is very easy to work with. Charming."



**GALAXY QUEST**  
T: Sigourney Weaver & Alan Rickman. L: The regulars of the series' "over-the-hill" gang (played by Sam Rockwell, Rickman, Tim Allen, Daryl Mitchell, Weaver & Tony Shalhoub).

# SIGOURNEY WEAVER

# *Galaxy Quest*

## QUEEN OF OUTER SPACE

IN SPACE, NO ONE CAN HEAR THAT YOUR SERIES WAS CANCELLED. AS A WASHED-UP S-F STEREOTYPE, WEAVER SPOOFS 'STAR TREK.'

By MITCH PERSONS

Queried on a TV interview, the late, great Frank Capra—director of classic Americana (*MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON*, *IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE*, et al)—was asked if all the stories about his boss, the allegedly bad-tempered, foul-mouthed and lecherous head of Columbia Studios, Harry Cohn, were fact or fiction. Capra pretended to bristle. "You know," he said, "I've been asked that question a million times, and I think it's about time I set the record straight. There have been a lot of nasty tales circulating about Harry. Let me tell you—they're all true."

And there are tales circulating about Sigourney Weaver. She is reputed to be intelligent, unpretentious, highly articulate and amiable. Happily, these stories are true, too. As evinced by a visit to the set of *GALAXY QUEST*, another word aptly applies to the actress: chameleon. Seating myself with the crew, I watched the re-





Passing: Weaver as human and alien, Gwen DeMarco. Top: The cast of *GALAXY QUEST*—including Weaver, Rickman, Allen & Smith—all are recruited for duty by authentic aliens. L: Weaver kicks her long-fu. Insert: Making her debut in *ANNIE HALL* (77), Weaver was on-screen for only six seconds.

hearsal of a scene. A quarrel between Tim Allen—who's affecting a William Shatner impersonation—and Tony Shalhoub is disrupted by a stunning, 6' tall blonde. The blouse of her fleet uniform is ripped-off in the ensuing struggle; she withdraws, mouth agape, with most of her bosom exposed.

"Cut!"

The actress, her clothes intact, addresses me during a break. As she expresses a fondness for magazines that chronicle production of sci-fi and fantasy films, I initially presumed that I was being flattered by a very affable but sophisticated ingenue. But, gazing beyond the blonde tresses, it dawned on me that I was chatting with Sigourney Weaver (no doubt that you came to this same realization just about two paragraphs ago). During the morning, between camera set-ups, she could afford me only sound bytes. She graciously suggested a rendezvous during her lunch hour...

Weaver, at 50 years of age, is breathtakingly beautiful. While conversing, she gracefully articulates with her hands, sometimes to the point of near-distractiveness. I was wishing that, without prompting from yours truly, she'd broach comparisons of Ripley, her pioneering *ALIEN* icon, to the flawed, semi-retired siren whose career is eulogized on reruns of *GALAXY QUEST*. I got my wish.

"*GALAXY QUEST* gives me a chance to play sort of a dual role," said the actress. "I am this over-the-hill starlet, Gwen DeMarco, and also her alter ego on a TV series, Lt. Tawny Madison. The story behind the movie is that Gwen and her fellow actors were stars of a show called *GALAXY QUEST*, which was about a bunch of outer space good guys. The show was a big hit at the time it was broadcast, but fell into almost complete oblivion after it was cancelled. Twenty years later, the 'Questarians,' as they are called, are traveling the

## SIGOURNEY WEAVER

**"You may be wondering why, after playing Ripley in the *ALIEN* films, I'd do another sci-fi project. I loved the script. Gwen is an extension of every frustrated starlet who ever existed."**



"I've lived life after the *ALIEN* series," says Weaver, moonwalking in middle age. "It's been a privilege to play Ripley [it] because she's so different from me."

country playing to sci-fi conventions. A group of real-life aliens, the Thermans, have been monitoring syndicated reruns of the series, and think the shows are for real. The Thermans kidnap Gwen and her friends because they believe that they are the only people who can save their planet.

"You may be wondering why, after playing Ripley in the *ALIEN* films, I'd do another sci-fi project. I loved the script. Gwen is an extension of every frustrated starlet who ever existed."

just felt nice to go from a woman who's been in prison to a manic '50s housewife, who writes a book, to this character of Gwen.

"Initially, I thought it was probably a bad idea to do this. But I was drawn to it. First of all, I love Tim Allen, I love [co-star] Alan Rickman and I loved the script, and I thought, 'I don't know if it's appropriate for me to play this part and everything, but I'm really drawn to Gwen.' And that's because I've never played anyone like her. I see her as an extension of every frustrated starlet who ever existed.

"Gwen is definitely not solidly grounded. She did a stint in Vegas as a showgirl, then she came to L.A., won some local beauty contests—that sort of thing. She's very pleasant, very good-hearted, a natural beauty but terri-



ribly, terribly insecure as an actress. I see her as probably taking some acting classes to improve herself, taking dance lessons and voice lessons, but, even with that, she always seems to be missing a beat or two career-wise.

"I wanted to be able to develop this woman to the fullest because I was so intrigued by her, so what I did was give her my own back story. I was offered a big part in *ANNIE HALL* ('77),

# THE MAKING OF *Galaxy Quest*

## FILM'S FIRST CONCEPT VS. A REFURBISHED VISION THAT'S JUICED ON IN-JOKES.

By MITCH PERSONS

During its four-year stretch in the 1970s, *GALAXY QUEST* chronicled the adventures of stalwart Jason Nesmith (played by Tim Allen) and his crew of space voyagers, half-alien first officer, Sir Alexander Dane (Alan Rickman), leggy young woman Gwen DeMarco (Sigourney Weaver), callow navigator Tommy Webber (Daryl Mitchell) and befuddled tech specialist Fred Kwan (Tony Shalhoub). The commander and his compatriots explored new worlds, fired phasers at rebels and belabored messages of world peace with pages of dialogue that could have viewers for bathroom breaks. Then, abruptly, the network cancelled *GALAXY QUEST*.

Flash forward 20 years later—the cast of the once popular series, exiled to sci-fi conventions, wring-out rent money by signing autographs for a handful of fans (aka “Questarians”). The over-the-hill gang soon learn their celebrity is intact within a foreign market, specifically a martian colony from the planet Thermamin. The aliens, who have been monitoring syndicated reruns of *GALAXY QUEST*, are convinced the broadcasts are authentic historical documents. The extraterrestrials recruit the series regulars to rescue their solar system from a



Production designer Linda DeSenna: "One reason I wanted to do this is because everything didn't have to be high-tech. We could be today."

sadistic nemesis.

“There is a new angle here that does not set *GALAXY QUEST* apart from other sci-fi films with the same theme,” noted actor Jed Rees, who plays Teb, a Thermamin. “The angle is, how can these aliens, who are so advanced scientifically, be so naive as to believe that a fictional show is actually the real thing?”

“It does start out dramatically enough,” said Sigourney Weaver, “what with these struggling, out-of-work actors trying to re-establish themselves in a business that has pretty much forgotten about them. That part is very touching. But when you consider the outrageous characters that are involved in this story like Jason, Tim’s character, who is a hard-drinking blow-hard and a bully, and Gwen, the woman I play—a

big, bosom over-the-hill blonde starlet, a sort of a latter-day Norma Desmond—then the humor creeps in, and you can just sit back and laugh at the antics. There is even a conventioneer, played by Sam Rockwell, who comes along with the Questarians on their real space odyssey, and he is terrified all of the time. He’s a long-time fan of sci-fi shows, and he keeps insisting that the ‘unnamed crew member’ is going to be the first one to die.”

The self-effacing humor is visible in the set design. Built under the supervision of production designer Linda DeSenna, the backgrounds have an almost cheesy look that’s evocative of the original *STAR TREK*.

“That’s especially true with the inside of NSEA Protector,” said DeSenna. “The Thermans have built this ship with which to transport the Questarians to their planet. Since the only design the Thermans know is one they’ve seen on the TV broadcasts, they reproduce it as best they can and the set wasn’t that specific to begin with.”

The interior of the NSEA Protector was originally conceptualized as a vessel on a grand though realistic scale. Harold Ramis (ANALYZE THIS) was initially tapped as the director of *GALAXY QUEST* and, in November, 1998, DeSenna flew out to Chicago to confer



Weaver & Allen in DeSenna's NSEA Protector (the self-mocking design).

with him. “Harold and his assessors’ concept of the ship was they wanted the bridge to be like it was executed by a very expensive production designer who had a lot of money,” said DeSenna. “Then Harold decided that his type of direction wasn’t right for the project, so we started working with Dean Parisot. Dean’s idea of design was a little more economical, a little more self-mocking. We were able to make things look cheap enough, but I would have liked to have made them look even cheaper.”

“Harold had his own ideas about what he wanted the picture to look like. The way the script was initially written, it took place not in the present day but in some unspecified period, probably the late sixties. Harold insisted that everything—the sets, the costumes—be depicted as purposefully dark and vague. When Dean came on board, he switched the time period to the late seventies, the early eighties and then, finally, the beginning of the millennium. Now the sets are more modern, more brightly lit and a little more technical.”

“Dean did manage to change more than sets and



Weaver & Allen navigate the main reactor. Initial director Harold Ramis preferred a Neolithic setting, but Dean Parisot opted for a more "cosmopolitan" design.

design. When Harold was on the film, it was a different script. It wasn't as much of a sci-fi adventure/comedy as it is now. Of course, in fairness to Harold, when he was working on this picture, nobody had been cast, and the era in which the events took place hadn't really been settled on. Dean had a much more solid script to work with and, by the time he started, Sigourney Weaver, Tim Allen and all of the others had already been signed.

"One thing that I was aware of, and that I did mention even to Harold, is something that all TV shows do and that was reuse set pieces. Fans usually recognize the same furniture and walls that are recycled for later episodes of a series. We didn't get a chance to do that because of time. I wanted to reuse props, to have specific props that we actually saw in Jason Nesmith's house, like he had taken them home. I wanted to have this meta of recognition going.

"One of the reasons I wanted to do this film is because everything didn't have to be real high-tech and vacu-formed, and we could let things be kind of, well, tacky. And so it just

evolved that way. Besides, it helps with the laughs if somebody can look at a set, and say, 'Hey, that doesn't look like a real spaceship.'

"And there are a lot of laughs in this movie," continued Daryl Mitchell, who portrays Tommy Webber. "But there were even more laughs behind the scenes, and most of them came from Tim Allen. We all knew Tim is a fine comic actor, but he never seems to forget that he is first and foremost a comedian."

A smiling Tim Allen shrugs and acknowledges that "Sarris, an alien, is the villain of the piece. He's pretty violent when he meets up with my character, Jason Nesmith. In the scene I finished doing today, Sarris has shape-shifted so that he looks like crew member Fred Kwan. I get the chance to beat the crap out of him. But I think I went a little too far. I hit Tony [Shalhoub] pretty hard, for real, in the head. Dean [Parisot] shouted, 'Get that actor out of there!' Not 'Tim,' not 'Allen,' but 'that actor.' So they put the stunt man in. He managed to get through the scene without giving anybody a concussion."

## SIGOURNEY WEAVER

**"I got ALIEN, Gwen got GALAXY QUEST. She did the series but she was totally this sex object in it, an image she didn't want. Now she's sort of this big, buxom latter-day Norma Desmond."**

which I turned down because I was involved in a soap. The part was supposed to be the girl at the beach who doesn't have a sense of humor; you know, the girl with the lobsters. So instead, [director/leading man] Woody Allen offered me the part of one of the people at the party. My line was that famous line from the Roy Lichtenstein painting, 'I'd rather die than ask Brad for help.' My manager was furious with me. He said, 'You're going to be cut out of that movie completely!' Well, of course, I wasn't and things turned out fine for me. If Gwen had been offered that same role, I think she would probably have looked back and thought, 'What? What if I had taken that larger part, and what if I could've been an artistic soy, and what if I really could have been someone who can act and not just someone who looks good?'

"I got ALIEN, Gwen got GALAXY QUEST. I can just picture Gwen's manager saying, 'Look, this is a series. This is going to put you on the map. It's going to make you a star. So that was her crossroad. She did the series, and it was great

for what it was, but she was totally this sex object in it, an image she didn't want.

"Then there was her personal life, which was just as chaotic as her professional one. She had this on-again, off-again relationship with the Tim Allen character, Jason, which did nothing to improve her self-worth. Jason, the star of the TV series, was kind of an insufferable kid, the type of actor who lived for the adoration of his fans. He was so self-centered, he didn't want to have a serious commitment to anyone. Now Gwen is going to call him on some of this stuff. There's a scene in GALAXY QUEST where we're on a planet. Jason says something like, 'Well, if you had been more supportive, you could have held on to me,' and Gwen retorts, 'What do you mean? I could have held on to you??'

"In spite of the setbacks, though, I think Gwen really tried to make something of herself, but she knew she was failing. When GALAXY QUEST was cancelled, she tried to get another series role but she was so identified with Tawny Madison that she couldn't find work.

Weaver: "The GALAXY QUEST cast [Allen, Nesmith & herself] are these unshakable losers whom aliens regard as gods. From this long comes the humor."



She wound up teaching yogs, going to these sci-fi conventions, things like that. Being in this real-life situation with the aliens, now this is a chance for her to finally succeed. She really doesn't want to be there, she doesn't want to really be in outer space but she realizes that she is a loser, and to be given this kind of acknowledgement—even by other creatures—is amazing to her. Jason, who is instrumental in talking his co-stars into going on this mission, is too caught up in his role to admit to the aliens that we are just actors, not real space pioneers. Gwen has to come through, and come through well, because everybody believes she is Tawny Madison.

"The irony here is that *GALAXY QUEST* is about

## SIGOURNEY WEAVER

"It's the first time I've transferred my Ripley persona into a comedy; but I think the 'prim and proper' costume I wear in *GALAXY QUEST* will forever kill the memory of Ripley."



F. The sassy Weaver ranked #71 in Empire magazine's "Top 100 Movie Stars of All Time" (Oct. '97). L. As Ripley in *ALIENS*. "I read the script but stopped over pages of stage directions. I didn't know guns were the stars until we started."

these unbelievable losers with no sense of self-worth. They are put into this situation which they have absolutely no idea how to handle, yet there are these creatures who think that they're gods. From this treasury comes most of the humor of the picture. If I correctly understand the combined vision of [director] Dean Parisot and writers David Howard and Robert Gordon, it is also almost like a *WIZARD OF OZ* sort

of thing, where each of us get what we need from this experience and we come out fulfilled. I'm reluctant to say how this does happen, but it should be obvious when you see the film.

"I have done comedy work before, like the *HOST-BUSTERS* films and *WORKING GIRL*, but this is the first time I've taken my Ripley persona and transferred it into a comedy, however, I think that the 'prim and proper' costume I wear in

*GALAXY QUEST* has killed the memory of Ripley forever. And it is very, very different playing a sci-fi comedy, with the long waits and everything. On these long setups, like the ones today, it's not like the other comedies I've done, where you play the scenes in pretty quick succession. Here, you have these two-hour breaks where you're waiting for everyone to do the setup, the green screen, and this and that. It is a challenge, I

must say that, to keep the lightness when there are so many breaks in concentration. That's why I'm glad we have Dean as a director, because he keeps track of where the heart and the humor really is.

"Dean also manages to make these characters slowly evolve, rather than having them hear the spaceship and immediately become heroes. I'm glad for that slow transition because, when the film begins, these people are probably the least likely heroes in the world. I have many scenes where I am put to a test and it's just like watching a car accident: I'm waiting to be found out by the aliens but, for some reason or another, I always sort of squeak through. Then, when everybody is together, we can be ourselves. Most of us are trying to escape from this lunacy we've gotten ourselves into."

"I can't speak for Tim or Allen but I see *GALAXY QUEST* as being a very relevant story. We have this villain, Sarris, a creature who looks like a giant squid and is incredibly cold-hearted and cruel. With Sarris, it is genocide against the good Thermians. That whole invasion of Kosovo and all the violence that is going on now—innocent people being gunned down—has a lot of relevance with this film. What Sarris is doing to these people is just what you read about in the news: wipe them out for no other reason than they're there."

"Sarris, in some ways, resembles the creature in *ALIEN*: total evil, total destruction, but at the time that 1979 film was made, the world was in a completely different mindset. I just recently went to a retrospective of the *ALIEN* pictures, and all the time I sat there and saw myself on the big screen—something I hadn't done since the films first came out—I remembered how I felt making that first one. I recall that I was astounded by my good fortune.

I was working with Ridley Scott, a director whom I had admired. He had just come off that fine period film, **THE DUELLISTS**. I used to wander around those magnificent **ALIEN** sets thinking, "This is so cool. They built this just for us. We don't have to pretend anything..." I had not realized for a second that, of course, it was for the movie. I just couldn't get it straight.

"Because it had been such a stretch since I had seen **ALIEN**—maybe five, seven, ten, years—I was able to watch it objectively, just for the beauty of it. It is such a beautifully shot film. And all the actors and everything were really so great. It is a real character piece. So much has happened, though, in the 20 years since that movie came out that it seems more like 50 years. It feels like so, so long ago." □

Weaver as **GALAXY QUEST**'s stereotypical star. "She is pleasant but not solidly grounded. She couldn't find work after her series got canceled."



# KELLY VAN HALEN

MAKING HER MOVIE DEBUT IN  
3-D, A DRUMMER'S EX-WIFE  
DEVELOPS HER OWN CAREER.

By SARA BARRETT  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDA TINFEM





"When women combine their intelligence with their beauty, as part of their beauty, it's an interesting. I think a lot of times that can be interesting."



It's a hot afternoon in Los Angeles. The scent of honeysuckle idly hangs in the air at Kelly Van Halen's residence, which is entirely bereft of formality. A couple of minutes after exchanging introductions, Van Halen and I are lounging by her backyard pool and sipping Evian. I have to keep reminding myself that our time together is limited. In another two hours, the Toronto-born actress will be picking up her offspring from his friend's house.

A little more than a decade ago, the then 20-year-old blonde wed Van Halen drummer, Alex. The birth of a son couldn't circumvent an eventual split between the couple, but Ms. Van Halen is not grieving divorcee, nor does she lean on her former spouse's celebrity: "For 11 years, I lived in my husband's shadow as 'the wife of.' I wasn't even 'Kelly' anymore. There was no room for what I wanted to do. It was a very degrading position to be in. A sense of self is very important, and it's especially important in terms of raising a male. I want to show my son that his mother is capable of taking care of herself, is capable of work, is capable of doing a lot of things. In his father's business, women are not really respected at all."

The actress pauses to sip some of her water, then stares thoughtfully. I ask her about her feelings in regard to the divorce.

"It's always disappointing when a marriage doesn't work out. We had a fairly successful marriage for many years. We both realized that we just weren't right for each other, but we have a wonderful son and I'm very grateful for that. I know too many people in unhappy marriages. These people are miserable and they don't do anything about it. This offends me terribly because



"A great character role is not the easiest thing to find, especially for women in their thirties. The film/TV industries are still very male-oriented & still very age-oriented."

cause they resolve to remain unhappy in their lives."

Van Halen leans back in her lawn chair, soaking-up sun. It's a picture postcard rendering of a blonde L.A. starlet sans the reality check: the youthful beauty performs a balancing act between plying her professional trade and raising her kid.

"My child comes first as my priority and responsibili-

ty but I find the time for acting. I think flexibility is the key to anything. His father is very involved in his life too, so I'm lucky in that way."

She recently wrapped *THE MAGIC BOX*, directed by Brett Leonard (*LAWNMOWER MAN, VIRTUOSITY*), which chronicles the union of real-life illusionists Siegfried and Roy. Van Halen plays Mrs. Nagle, the

wife of a cruise line owner. "THE MAGIC BOX was different than any project I've ever been involved in," she smiles. "It was an IMAX movie, shot in 3-D on a huge screen. A lot of the acting was improvisational, without a lot of dialogue, which can often be more difficult to pull off than when you have a lot of lines."

In addition to film work, Van Halen is certain to crack the TV medium but would prefer not to be locked into femme fatale roles. "Actually, I'd love doing comedy and would eventually love to be part of a sitcom ensemble," she shares. "As far as movies are concerned, I'm interested in anything with a great character. That's not the easiest thing to find, especially for women in their 30s. The film/TV industries are still very male-oriented and still very age-oriented. When women combine their intelligence with their beauty, it's so powerful. A lot of women in their twenties don't know how to do that. I know I didn't do now, and I think a lot of times that can be intimidating. Look at actresses like Susan Sarandon and Shonda Rhimes. They are so inspirational because they are not just beautiful, but they possess a solid, powerful sexual energy."

Then we broach fame and its frills or consequences. Van Halen is demonstrative about slipping away from another's residual limelight, and outspokenly resists identification as an ex-celebrity squeeze. "My husband handled fame really well," she reaffirms. "That was one thing I learned from him. I learned that the less you make of things, the less other people make a big deal. If you are famous because you do something well, then I applaud you. If people want to applaud me because they enjoy the work I do, then I consider that a huge compliment." □

# FAMKE JANSSEN

# HOUSE ON

# HAUNTED HILL

AN EX-BOND GIRL IS QUEEN OF THE CASTLE IN UPDATED HYBRID OF B-FILMS, BOGEYMAN, BOGUS SUBPLOTS & A BAD MARRIAGE.

BY DOUGLAS EBY

Whatever prompted a former Bond girl to inhabit *THE HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*, a remake of William Castle's 1958 kitsch classic? "It was the opportunity to be cast in a film with Geoffrey Rush," gushes Famke Janssen. "He's such an incredible actor, and I've always wanted to work with him. That was the main reason and then, when I looked at the script and looked at this character, I liked the idea of this couple who have been together a long time. Their relationship is very dysfunctional but there is some reason they stay together." The incompatible twosome, Frederick and Annabelle Loren, were played in Castle's movie by Vincent Price and Carol Ohmart. Reflecting on her late father's '58 film, Terry Castle—producer of the remake—has recounted that it was the Lorenas' "wonderfully sardonic relationship" that especially appealed to her. The script for the '99 release has reprise that "bitter and mocking" friction: "It was on the page and it



Janssen checks into *THE HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*. "I definitely play a bitch! The script was very entertaining, it had humor, which is very important to me."

was great to play with it on screen, with Geoffrey," smiles Janssen.

Bill Malone, director of the remake, was drawn to the film as a result of his affection for 1930s pulp fiction. Janssen is less nostalgic. "I just sort of gave it my own spin—what I felt," she reveals. "And with films like this, you just have to have the right balance, but you never quite know if you make it, just because there's special effects you'll never see until the rest of the world sees the movie. And it should be tongue-in-cheek because it's a genre that's unrealistic, but you don't want to take it so far over the top that the audience loses interest. I've found it's a challenge."

Janssen compares the script with the cynical streak that fueled her past films: "I would say *GOLDEYE*, the Bond movie I did years ago, and *DEEP RISING* had some of the same qualities as *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*. But I would really like to do it all. Along with the chance to work with Geoffrey, I accepted this part because I thought the script was very entertaining. I thought it



Jennifer Lawrence as Goethrey (Sarah Paulson), Taissa Farmiga, Peter Gallagher look on. Her "party favors," guns placed in miniature coffins, are homage to 1968's *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*, also her dysfunctional marriage to Flash (R)



"The character I play in *X-MEN* is very different from the femme fatale I performed in *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*, who was shaded in tongue-in-cheek humor."

had humor—and that is very important to me. But I've shot a few movies after I did *[Terry Castle's] production* which are more straightforward, dramatic stuff and I enjoyed that just as much."

Did the actress screen William Castle's original *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*? "Yes, I did. So many horror movies have been made since 1968, and there are certain things in the film that just don't work anymore. People have gotten used to so many ways of getting scared in film; that first *HOUSE* doesn't seem so scary when seen now."



But at the time, I'm sure it was terrifying."

Janssen notes that, like its predecessor, this year's *HOUSE* has hybridized horror and humor, however, though the screenplay is estimably tailored to her tastes, the actress admits her participation with its development was non-existent. "I actually got involved really late on this project. And I think every-

**"Though terrifying at the time [1958], there are certain things in the original HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL that don't work anymore: we're used to the ways of being scared."**

hody got cast a couple of weeks prior to shooting. Geoffrey was still on MYSTERY MEN when we started working, so we did a couple of things he wasn't in—like some scenes with Peter Gallagher. We all tried to bring as much as we could to the characters and we all talked about the script, but there was no rehearsal time. We stuck to the script and then did what actors do, which is to explore the characters as much as possible. [Not having much time for rehearsal] would have been more damaging in a more dramatic film. But with this genre, there's so much that has nothing to do with the characters; it has more to do with other developments, like special effects and stuff like that. So it's not critical, as with other genres, to have that rehearsal period. On the other films I've just done, I really valued having that period because there was a lot we could find in rehearsal that we couldn't find on screen."

The plot of HOUSE regresses to the central theme of the original film. Five strangers convene at a "house with a hideous past." Each is offered \$1 million to spend (i.e. survives) the evening. Janssen notes her character preferred to invite "her own group of people but the 'party guests' who show up are neither her personal choices nor the guests who qualified for her husband's original list."

Just as we broach further similarities with the



Janssen in HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL (far). "I'd say GOLDENEYE, the Bond movie I did years ago, and DEEP RISING were some of the same [transposed] qualities as HOUSE. We stuck to the script but there was no rehearsal time!"



h&w oldie, Janssen again professes her admiration for her Oscar-winning costar: "You keep your eyes open, you watch what Geoffrey Rush does and I think that makes you a better actor. My character, I found, was not the sassiest one to play. I was worried during filming because there's a fine line you can cross between an audience liking the sarcasm, which has developed between me as the wife and Geoffrey as the husband, or taking it too far where it becomes hard to watch. I haven't seen the film yet, so I don't know how we succeeded in that."

Not unlike her routine on past films, Janssen declined to watch the dailies but viewed a couple of scenes in loop-in added dialogue. "I definitely play a bitch in the film," she laughs. But the actress did not lean on Carol Ohmart's performance from the earlier film. "I purposely didn't," she says. "I feel this is an updated film. It is based on the old movie but we're very different people, and I don't like to imitate other people's performances, anyway. I try to bring something new to it, and keep it more original."

Upon wrapping the film, Janssen was subsequently cast in CIRCUS and LOVE AND SEX. She's currently signed to co-star, with Patrick Stewart and Halle Berry, in a live action adaptation of the X-MEN comic book: "The character I will play is very different from my HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL femme fatale, who was shaded with tongue-in-cheek humor. I haven't really started working on X-MEN yet, so I don't quite know what the tone's going to be. But [director] Brian Singer will bring something very different to the project. And I think the people involved in it are really cool, too."

Facing, top: Janssen with HOUSE director William Malone (SCARED TO DEATH); L: Partying with Allister (MURKIY ALIEN); The seductress (right) will turn superheroine in X-MEN



# RELIC HUNTER

After a two-year stint on **GENERAL HOSPITAL** (1985-87), her roles invariably ranged from **ZOMBIE NIGHTMARE** to **SHOWDOWN IN LITTLE TOKYO**: character names were generically Asian (e.g. Mai Cheng, Kimiko, Venus Poon, Chiu-Bei, et al). But her portrayal of Cassandra, a partyin' voyager adrift in **WAYNE'S WORLD** (1992), turned Tia Carrere into a bona fide star. She subsequently performed juicy roles in action extravaganzas (**TRUE LIARS**, comedy (**HIGH SCHOOL HIGH**),

*At: Carrere as "Ariane Asakawa" in **FORBIDDEN SUN** (1995, an adaptation of Michael Crichton's book. At: As the RELIC HUNTER (aka Sydney Fox).*

## TIA CARRERE, AS A "FEMALE INDIANA JONES," FINDS GOLD: AN ASSERTIVE WOMAN'S ROLE.

BY DAN SCAPPEROTTI

But before we plunge into her syndicated show, I just can't resist a query or two about Carrere's participation in the aforementioned **ZOMBIE NIGHTMARE**. "That was me saying 'Really? You're offering *me* all that money to do this movie?'" laughs the Hawaiian-born actress. "It was all about me going to the bank and cashing the check, and having the cash in my hand. And I got a free trip to Montreal. It was one of those teenage slasher films. A bunch of friends go out one night and a zombie kills them all one at a time. Wow, big surprise! Note the wardrobe, I'm in my miniskirt and high heels and cropped top—and, for some strange reason, I go running into an auto paint shop. I don't know why. The place I choose to hide is behind a glass wall because that's really smart, and no one can see you through a glass wall. So I'm standing and facing the camera with this glass wall in front of me. I'm pressing my face forward while looking for the zombie and, of course, he pops up from behind and throws his hand into the glass, smashing it. You get to see it in all its glory because, after all, I'm standing in front of a glass wall.

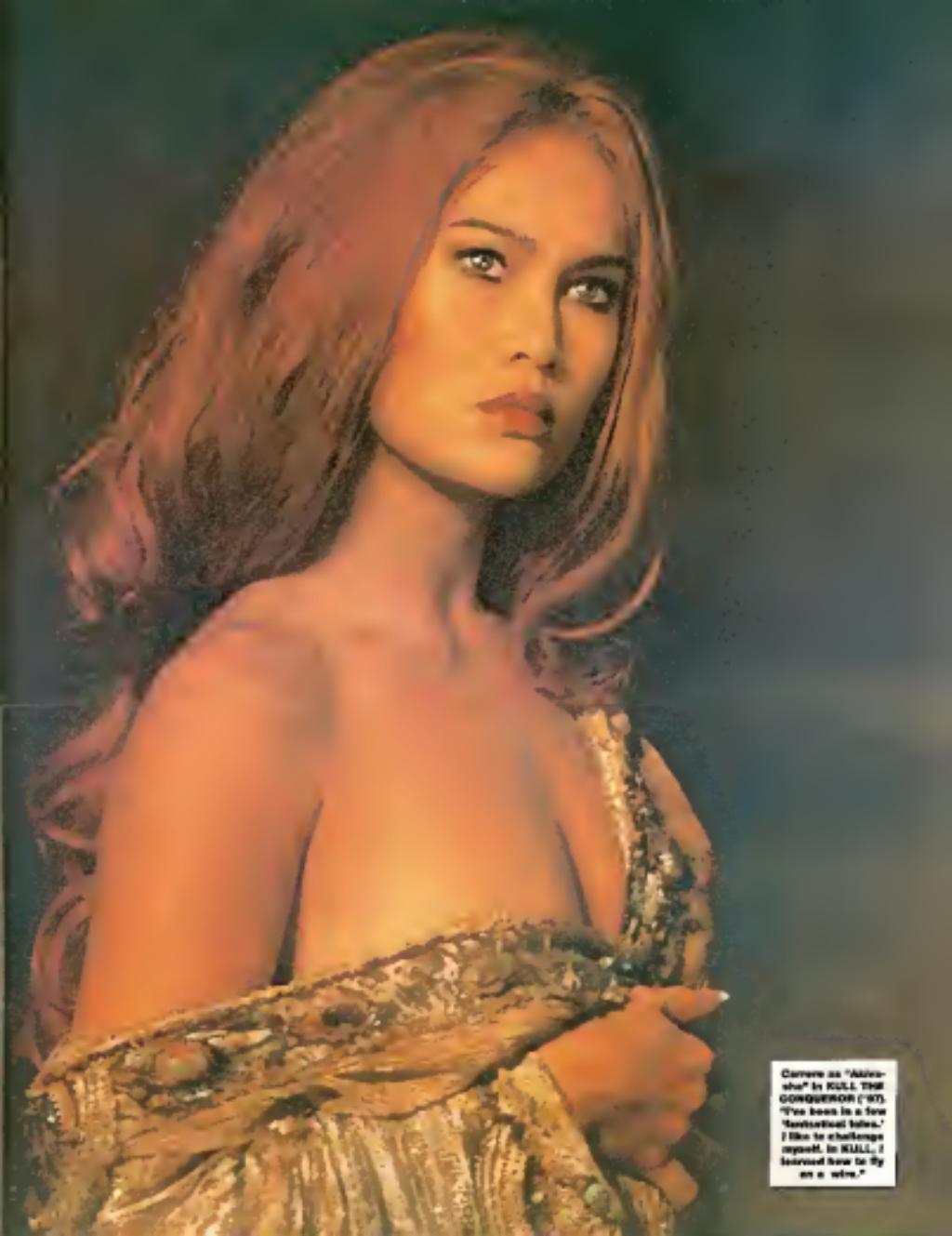
"I'm back in Canada now. I'm in Toronto. The first time I came to Toronto was for the **FRIDAY THE 13TH** series (**Year of the Monkey** episode, 1/15/90). All I remember about that is that these little monkeys came to life and killed me."

Carrere's other TV credits include a **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** episode, directed by William Friedkin (**THE EXORCIST**, **THE**



fantasy (**KULL THE CONQUEROR**) and **DAEDALUS ENCOUNTER**, the latter a rare example of a CD game developed for a central female character. Carrere was cast in the sci-fi, interactive adventure as a precursor to Lara Croft (aka Tomb Raider). Cast in a wacky series as **RELIC HUNTER**, Carrere is the embodiment of Lara Croft...





Constance Marie as "Alura-Jade" in *KILL THE CONQUEROR* (97). "I've been in a few 'romantic' roles." I like to challenge myself. In *KILL*, I learned how to fly on a wire."



**FRENCH CONNECTION**), that's titled *Dread Man's Chest*. "Friedkin is a funny guy," she shrugs. "He works very fast. The producers called and told me that they had a rock and roll story, and asked if I would be interested in doing it. It was pretty cool. I remember, at one point, they put up a false wall because the guy that kills me is supposed to throw my head up against the wall. So Friedkin takes me by my hair and throws me against the wall and I was shocked—until I realized it was made from foam rubber. I laugh every time I see that scene of me dying in the bathtub."

Reflecting upon her career, Carrere is abruptly cognizant that past credits are, indeed, genre-related. "I hadn't thought about it," she says, "but I guess I have been in a few 'fantastical' tales. I like doing wacky things. I like challenging myself. In *KULL THE CONQUEROR*, I learned how to fly on a wire and, in *RELIC HUNTER*, I get to sword fight and rope and do martial arts and learn different languages. I'm experiencing everything I can. It seems that you get to do that in the more fantastical or adventure-oriented stories."

**L**ynn Carrere in *RELIC HUNTER*. R: "My sidekick, Nigel Baileya (Charles Anagnoski) plays the terrorist in my movie."



But her 1993 "fantasy woman"—linked more closely to the libido than any phylum of film—prompted Carrere's split from squeaky supportive roles. "WAYNE'S WORLD was my breakout film, absolutely," says the actress. "It went from, 'Who's that cool, Asian-rocker chick?' to 'That's Tia Carrere!' Then, later, TRUE LIES just brought it up another level. So not only did the kids recognize me, but then the parents recognized me, too!"

"WAYNE'S WORLD was a great career defining film. Mike Meyer—who played 'Wayne Campbell'—is very talented and very inventive. He comes up with characters on the set at 2AM. His mind just goes off and he goes into this new world and creates it. My character was Cassandra, the no nonsense, kick-ass Asian rocker chick, who is not so different from RELIC HUNTER's Sydney Fox, the tough, intelligent kick-ass ancient civilizations professor. I don't know if it's something in my demeanor but I end up playing all of these really tough broads."

Unlike some of her big screen "bad girls," RELIC HUNTER is guaranteed long term survival. "I guess I do die a lot," acknowledges the thespian. "In TRUE LIES, I went off that bridge in the limousine. I love being a villain. I love the opportunity you have to be a little larger than life. A little more arch—and to be a little freer in your choices, and the way you play your dialogue. It's definitely fun being vampy. You can be a little more provocative. It's a very strong position for a female to be in, to play the villainess. It's great."

"I knew TRUE LIES was a huge movie. Arnold Schwarzenegger, the film's star is wonderful. He's like a big teddy bear. He's easy going, approachable. A nice guy—a big kid. I was made very comfortable by [director] James Cameron. He was very kind, and always wanted to know how I felt about

## TIA CARRERE

**"We're entering the Millennium. [In RELIC HUNTER], Indiana Jones is a woman and she's a sexy, intelligent, strong female. We thought it'd be funny for her to be a fail-in-love character."**



Tia Carrere, catching some rays with Dee Wallace (left), makes her film debut in ALOHA SUMMER (top). In her next movie, TALES FROM THE CRYPT (pig (David Men's Chest episode) as "Pretty cool" (directed) William Friedkin was a funny guy." (P) As an unorthodox history prof who resuscitates as a RELIC HUNTER.



the take and that kind of thing. That made me more comfortable and gave me the confidence to make stronger choices. I'm glad I was part of that."

"James is very visual and he creates his own gizmos. He's like 'Gizmo Man.' He creates all his own camera equipment so he gets the shot the way he wants to. He was the first director that I'd ever seen holding a hand held monitor that was run on television frequencies. The cameras would drop a signal into that little monitor. Now you can get them from Casio at a Radio Shack. He had just created this stuff. He's very specific when it comes to his action and visual effects. He knows exactly where he wants the explosions to go, and exactly how much of the frame he wants to take up with this or that. That's why his movies are so outstanding."

But even the most carefully choreographed venue can be problematic. "One scene was scary and difficult, and that's only because there was so much going on that it was frightening," recalls Carrere. "Jamie Lee [Curtis] and I are in the limousine. It's where I first take her hostage in the middle of this huge fire fight.



It starts off with the limousine pulling up. I'm hiding behind it and shooting the gun, and explosions going off everywhere. We jump into the limousine. The limo driver is supposed to gun it and take off as a helicopter lands in its space. But the limo dies as the helicopter descends, and it almost lands on top of the limo's roof. Jamie Lee jumps onto my side of the car

because the helicopter was landing on her side. It was very scary. Fortunately, they didn't continue landing because the lines just did not move. People always say, 'Oh it's fake. It's a stunt. It's special effects.' But whenever you're approximating dangerous situations on film, there is always a level of danger. Whenever we have to detonate an explosion on RELIC HUNTER, there is always a great respect for the fact that it's an unknown quantity: I mean, you never know exactly where something is going to explode, or which way a projectile will be going. So you take precautions."

Cast on her TV series as Professor Sydney Fox—aka RELIC HUNTER—Carrere describes the character as "a professor of ancient civilizations and, even in her teaching style, she's very unorthodox. She will have a sword or spear throwing or native dances in her class-

## TIA CARRERE

"I think it's great that we have a strong, kick-ass woman like the Relic Hunter. I think there is a lot that women want to relate to in film and TV—and we're giving them what they want."



"WAVY'S WORLD was my breakout film. It went from 'Who's that chick? Is she a rocker chick?' to 'That's Tia Carrere!' TRUE LIES [8] brought it up another level." **B:** Assisted by Christian Anholt, Carrere's Relic Hunter searches for a smoking gun. "My character [is] a woman." **R:** In PATRIAL MISSION [1996].



room, and that sort of perturbs the rest of the staff at the school. She's a maverick. She is hired by individuals, by museums, by the head of the school to go and find these relics, these icons. Her travels take her to Nepal, Berlin, Scotland, Peru with her side kick, Nigel, who plays the worrier to my warrior. He's my teaching assistant who thought he was

signing up for a quiet job with an occasional trip to Boston. But I end up dragging him all over the world much to his chagrin. That creates comic possibilities seeing him deal with 'fish out of water' situations."

Exotic, lush locales are a requisite; fortunately, the constraints of a shooting schedule have induced the development of impromptu technology. "We have amazing sets," swoons Carrere. "Ed Hanna, our production designer, is a genius. What they do with Styrofoam and fiberglass and paint is something to behold. And Bill Wong, the DP, lights it like a huge movie. It's really a great looking show. A lot of the fantasy shows are just over the top, fantastical, broad, the lines are very broad or wacky. We always try to keep ours rooted in reality."

"The way I play it and the situations that we're in, and the sets, are very, very real looking. Then you throw in the odd, wacky situation and then play it for the comedy when the moment is appropriate. On our show, the danger to the characters is very real and that makes for a very nice tone for an action adventure."

Without batting an eye,



the actress readily admits that Sydney Fox is a distaff Indiana Jones. "Oh, definitely," she beamed. "I'm a huge fan of that series but our show is fresh and different. We're entering the Millennium. Indiana Jones is a woman and she's a sexy, intelligent, strong female. To keep her human, we brought up the fact that, in this day and age, many

women are in the work force and they can't keep together a relationship because they're trying to build a career and all that kind of stuff. So we thought it would be funny for Sydney Fox to be one of those 'fall-in-love' kind of characters. She's got boyfriends from this country, and that country, and they fit in and out of various stories. It's kind of funny because it sets her off-balance. She's looking for love like everybody else. I think that's a charming and endearing character trait. And it also makes for many provocative situations when the relic hunter is up against an ex-boyfriend for the same lion."

Carrere again reminds me to deflect preconceptions about the series: just because the title character is a woman, don't expect episodes to lapse into Harlequin romances. "It is first and foremost an action adventure show," she reaffirms. As a result of each script's physical obligations, she adheres to a disciplined workout: "I'm doing marital arts and stick fighting, and sword fighting and repelling and jumping. Lots of stuff. It's great. I'm having a great time."

"Off the set, I'm running and training in my trailer. I have a spinning bike. It's a stationary bike with a variable tension knob, a lever tightens up the tension so you can hardly move your legs around. It's sensational. For women, we stand out of the seat, the saddle and that's good for the backside and legs and everything. I have those elastic bands with the handles on them for the arms and free weights, plus all the stuff I do on the show anyway."

The first season, consisting of 22 episodes, was launched with *Buddha's Bowl*. The story behind the artifact: In 523 B.C., Buddha discards a magic bowl which perpetually overflows with alms. But acquisition of the relic triggers dire consequences. Flash forward to the 1990s: A Hong Kong busi-



Carrere as the RELIC HUNTER: "I train in my trailer. I'm doing martial arts, stick fighting & sword fighting, and repelling and jumping. I'm having a great time!"

nessman, who has sunk his company into bankruptcy, speculates that the mystical antique would restore his fortunes and circumvent a confrontation with his father. Of course, he's competing with Fox, who's been hired to recover the same bowl. "I really like that first show," says Carrere. "I haven't seen many of them so far. It looks great and I do amazing things in it."

Fox is just the latest in a string of strong female characters that have been sweeping the media. The studio brass may have interpreted the disappointing box office of *BARE WIRE* or the superior *THE LONG KISS GOODNIGHT* as a harbinger for business related to female crusaders and predators: *XENA* and *BUFFY*, however, proved they were wrong. Ditto Lara Croft and her profession of clones. "I think women have made great strides this century, from voting to being in the work place and being an economic demographic to deal with," says Carrere. "I think women have really come into their own in the past 50 years, so we have to have heroes in our likeness. I think it's great that we have strong, kick ass women like my character in *RELIC*

## TIA CARRERE

**"I love being a villain. I love the opportunity to be a little larger than life, a little more arch. It's definitely fun being vampy, and it's a very strong position for a female to be in. It's great!"**



"*RELIC HUNTER* [it] is, first and foremost, an action-adventure show," says Carrere. "I end up dragging my teaching assistant, Nigel Bailey [Christian Slater, left], all over the world...mostly to his chagrin. It creates comic possibilities." St. With Mekia Williams & Maitland Ward in *HIGH SCHOOL HIGH*



**HUNTER.** And these are women who are passionate, who are sexy. I think there is a lot that women want to relate to in film and television, and we're giving them what they want.

Last year, the actress did a more subdued role—as a New York beauty editor—in *MEET PRINCE CHARMING*, a production that was shot in Toronto. "It's a very

sweet, little romantic comedy," she smiles. "For one reason or another, she can't get her love life together. For her 29th birthday, her friend gives her a gift certificate to an on-line dating service where she meets all these very strange characters. It's like *YOU'VE GOT MAIL*: unfortunately, that film came out first, which is a real bummer. When the couple in our film get together, they realize they are next door neighbors who hate each other. It's like *PILLOW TALK* on the internet."

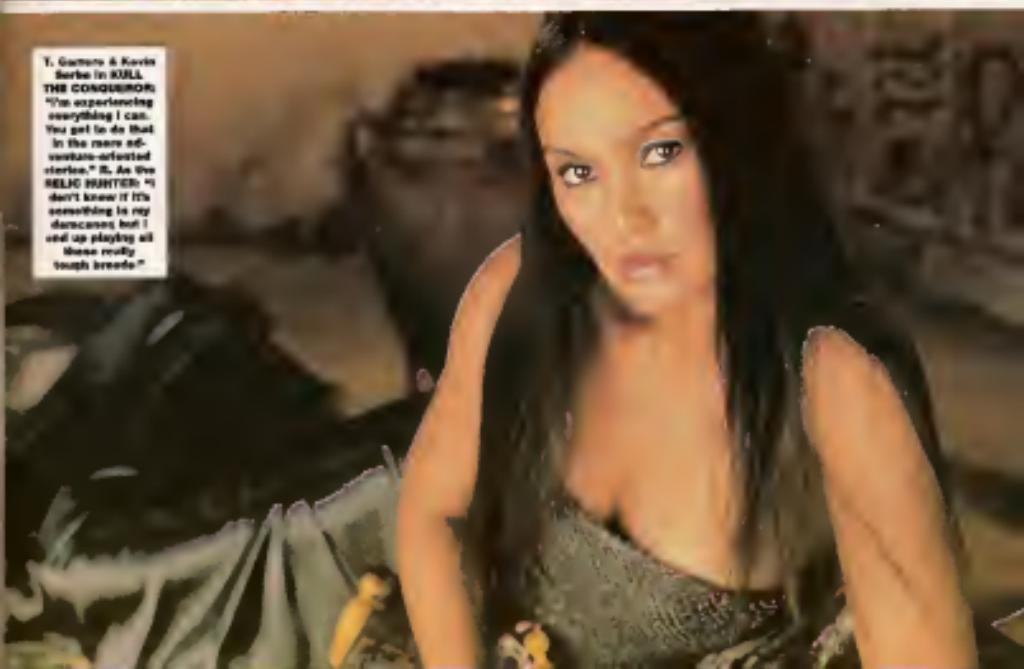
Last December, Carrere returned to her "fantastical" mishap via *MERLIN: THE RETURN*. "That was a vacation in South Africa last Christmas," she laughs. "Since I was in *WAYNE'S WORLD*, a lot of kids come to see my stuff. *MERLIN* is basically made for children. It's a fantasy tale in which I play an evil scientist that tries to bring back Medred and Morgana, the evil sorceress from Merlin's time King Arthur and his knights have to vanquish that evil and put them back in their portal."

The actress functioned as executive producer on *20 DATES*, a comedy organized by her company, Phenomenon Films. "The first film we made was *THE IMMORTALS* with Chris Rock, Eric Roberts and Tony Curtis," she explains. "An agent for director Myles Berkowitz told us that he had this guy who wants to do this video project for a minimum investment. Because it was a minimal investment, we said, 'Let's go with it' but it turned into this really wonderful film that had me laughing. I think anyone who is out there in the dating scene should see this film. It's hilarious. I made a cameo appearance."

In the event that *RELIC HUNTER* is a hit, will Carrere renew her role for a few seasons? "Well, that's what my contract says," she grins. "I'm having such a great time. I look forward to the many stories that Sydney gets to experience." □



**T. Gummer & Kevin Sorbo in KILL THE CONQUEROR:**  
"I'm experiencing everything I can. You get to do that in the more adventure-oriented stories." **K. Sorbo:** "I don't know if it's something in my DNA, but I end up playing all these really tough breeds."



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By MARC SHAPIRO



## THE SNAPDRAGON SINGER REFLECTS ON BONE CHILLERS, B-FILMS, CANNES, SEX & SATAN.

Barnett poses for Glenn Campbell. The black gloves were the editor's idea, the plain background was mine." B. "Gwen Stefani had her hands full when she photographed me on *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING* set."





Principles and Hollywood are like oil and water. They rarely mix and when they do, it is often the actress who ends up on the short, often naked, end of the stick. Linda Barrett has navigated that minefield and has avoided the shrapnel.

"Having principles actually makes things easier," offers the actress/singer/songwriter. When not appearing in genre flicks like *DARK DESTINY* and *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING*, Barrett belts out songs for Snapdragons, a techno group who just cut their maiden album. "When you have standards, you know what you will and will not do," continues Barrett. "There are certain lines that I will not cross."

I ask her to describe the parameters of those lines.

"Well, I would do nudity," replies Barrett who has, thus far, declined any on-screen pretense of disrobing. "I don't have a problem with nudity. I have a problem with trash. Don't get me wrong. I like watching HBO at two a.m. as much as the next person. And I'm not knocking the people who act in these films. It's often tough for actresses, especially at the B-movie level, to resist that kind of thing. I've met a lot of actresses who have made 70 movies—and nobody knows who they are. That's not where I want to end up. If exploitative roles catapulted their participants into stardom, I'd brush up on my contrived dialogue technique, practice some exaggerated moans and get in line for an audition."

Barrett in an enticing mixture of emotions and attitudes. Quietly but

"The posing for Linda Blair's on an L.A. rooftop. It was a guerrilla shoot, we got ten minutes of daylight." Below: "Me on ALIEN NATION." The makeup took 2 hours to apply. On the last shooting day, I kept the grass stains on and treated-out traffic."



confidently, she reaffirms her goal ("I want to be Madonna") with natural conviction. There is also a sense of vulnerability. "I get nervous as hell doing interviews," she admits.

Sara Barrett, born and raised in Seattle, experienced a relatively normal childhood. "I began writing song lyrics when I was 12, and I acted in some school plays. Back then, acting took a backseat to singing, which was my central focus. But by the time I enrolled in high school, both music and theatre arts became equally significant."

Transplanting her infatuation for acting to the University Of Southern California, the fledgling entertainer majored in theatre. The academic environment fueled her passion for drama and, during her four year stint at USC, she appeared in 74 student films.

Barrett made her professional debut in 1997 while working part time in the school's casting department. "I got the lead in *DARK DESTINY*. The director called, looking for actors, and I invited him to our acting class. He looked at a lot of people and then ended up offering me the role."

Shed for the duration of three weeks in a Los Angeles warehouse, the horror film sexually bonded Barrett's character "with the man of her dreams. Unfortunately, her relationship has certain inhibitions. For openers, after she has sex with this guy, she realizes that he's Satan. I felt prepared to take on that role. Because of the union, my character is diabolically inhabited and all hell breaks loose." Barrett's role encompassed two sex scenes, no nudity and a fairly comfortable introduction to the acting hustle. "There were a lot of cold nights, breathing sawdust, getting dirt under my fingernails and drinking cold 'bat' chocolate. When director Steve Kostro would get upset about something he would yell, 'Horse's ass!' Everybody thought it was hysterical and, by the end of the shoot, we would deliberately piss him off just to hear him yell it. We used to have contests to see who could get him to say it the most."

Upon wrapping *DARK DESTINY*, Barrett heard the director's trademark war cry one more time. "I decided to put blonde highlights in my hair. Right after I did that, I got a call from Steve, informing me that we had to shoot an additional sex scene. I told him I had changed my hair color and, after a 'Horse's ass!' that was heard around the world, we ended up shooting the

## SARA BARRETT

**"I've no problem with nudity, I have problems with trash. Starlets make up to 70 films & nobody knows who they are."**



"It's me and Charles. Roger Reeder's *Charles on the set of BONE CHILLERS*. Aids to Goozemupps. It was a horror series tailored for children. Charles kept me laughing."

scene with a towel on my head. We play it off in the film like I just got out of the shower. Thank God it was only two scenes. It works dramatically but I look ridiculous."

Barrett subsequently found work in the TV medium. She extricated her boyfriend from jail in a reenactment staged for *UNSOLVED MYSTERIES*, and was cast as an extraterrestrial in *ALIEN NATION*. It was during this period that Barrett ended up in a couple of short-lived punk rock bands. "I was in this one band called Lep-

rechaun In The Basement," she grins. "We were obnoxious on stage. My favorite song that we played was called *Get the Fuck Away from Me*. I actually found blank T-shirts in some Gothic shop on Melrose that had 'Get the fuck away from me' printed on the front of them in silver letters. I couldn't believe it. I bought four of them. We would wear them on stage and tear them off during that song. We had some great times and our songs weren't bad. But we were four control freaks struggling to get along. The chemistry was off. I think we broke up a week after I had stickers printed up. Since then, I've been superstitious about merchandise."

Additional TV gigs followed, including *THE OTHER SIDE*, a series documenting the paranormal, and *BONE CHILLERS*, a kiddie crossover into homogenized horror. And then Barrett nailed the quirky role of a Chinese restaurant waitress in *LOVE AND WAR II*. The movie prompted a trip to the Cannes film festival and the actress' initial brush with celebrity. "The press was asking all of these personal questions and I just blabbed on about everything. I just stood there, posing for every photographer. Finally, the director had to grab my arm and pull me into the theatre."

A chance meeting with another producer resulted in Barrett warbling *Awesom Grace* for a New York film. She concluded summer '99 with a cameo in *Full Moon's THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING* and a more substantive role in *THE AF-FAIR*, "where I play a woman on the rebound who falls for a mysterious stranger. After we finish up that film, I hope *Snappington* gets a chance to tour. I have the wheels show choreographed in my head, already. I know what costumes I want everybody to wear and what lighting I want. Whether the budget will be there...well, that remains to be seen. But I'd at least like to perform a live show."

Presently in contention for a British sci-fi movie, Barrett continues to balance optional vocations of acting and music. "If I get frustrated with the acting, I can say, 'Fuck this' and I can be a singer. On the other hand, I can say 'Forget this' and not have to deal with four other people's egos and just go act. Though I'm a relative newcomer in this business, I like film. I'm getting work, but I'm nowhere near where I want to be. I've done some good, low-budget work. But that's not where I want my career to be." □

# GRIFFIN DREW PHANTOM LOVE

**SURRENDER CINEMA'S SIREN, WHO SWINGS (ON-SCREEN) WITH ALIENS & GHOSTS, RAPS ABOUT EROTIC SCENES & DIRECTORS.**

BY JAKE WOODS

Though not a household name, she's on a roll. Griffin Drew has tallied no less than eight film roles since January '99, including a couple of movies for Surrender Cinema, the softcore/sci-fi appendage of Full Moon Studios. (Surrender's sci-fi subtext, lost in a surplus of sex, is only marginally visible with a couple of hairy accouterments. Take the company's *EXOTIC TIME MACHINE*—please! Scientists are transported to the bed chamber of Marie Antoinette, whom the "screen-writers" have presumed was a sex addict). The legacy continues with Drew's characterization in Surrender's *ANDROMINA*. "To tell you the truth," she relates in her native Georgia accent, "I didn't really understand the part. I think I'm an alien or some kind of goddess. I just kind of flit around the film in this lovely pink tutu. Eventually, I fall in love with one of the characters and he takes me to another planet and I become a shopaholic, or something."

Surrender subsequently cast Drew as a slightly more tangible sex object in *PHANTOM LOVE*. "That's the one I'm excited about,"



"There will be lots of years where I can play ugly, but only so many years that I can play beautiful. I enjoy capturing how I look today because this is forever."

she squeals. "It's a period piece and I've never been able to do one of those before." The starlet plays Italian-born Judith, whose father dispatches her to America. Ten years later, following her father's death and the depletion of the family fortune, she returns to the family manor in Italy. Her libertine ideals and demanor clash with her aunt's more conservative agenda. She does, however, draw the admiration and lusty rapture of her estate's resident ghost. Naturally, this saga is fueled on the ingenue's obligations to take off her clothes. Paradoxically, Drew notes that one of her role's assets was "the movie's wardrobe. It was just wonderful to wear those big dresses and gowns. I was like the Canderella of the story."

Acknowledging a body of B-movie work that includes the likes of *DINOSAUR ISLAND*, *DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRLS*, *BIKINI HOE-DOWN*, *INDECENT BEHAVIOR III* and *MARSEUSE*, Drew cites *PHANTOM LOVE* as a personal fave. "But there were drawbacks," she recounts. "It was freezing cold in this house they'd rented. Under those big ball gowns, I would be wearing long



"People believe if I'm an actress, I must be living in the Clampett's mansion. I tell them, 'Think of the outhouse and you'd be closer.'"

johns—with workout pants over those!—and a thermal shirt and maybe a crinoline. Coolest house I've ever been in in my life." The lovemaking scenes were equally frigid, i.e. shot on location rather than a toasty studio set. "It was probably 40 degrees in there," Drew shivers. "The crew wore parkas, hats, and gloves the entire time we were filming, but the cast was naked about half the time."

The starlet confides there are other liabilities to shooting scenes that lean on unbridled eroticism. "What unnerves me the most is a director who is doing his first one of this type of film. First

L: "Sexta is engagingly girlish," says photo Linda Tishman. R: Kristen Bell (left) parking up with Seann William Scott, far more of Sundance's sapphic sextet, in *PHANTOM LOVE* (1999).



of all, they're embarrassed and that makes you embarrassed. It's also important to feel that they are only interested in doing their job: specifically, strictly shooting the scene without focusing on 'cheap shot' views they can get of you. Sometimes you just want to ask them, 'Hey, are you actually doing something productive over there, or are you just playing with yourself?'

"It is easier working with a woman on this kind of film. That's why I enjoyed working with Maria Katsabi, who directed *PHANTOM LOVE*. Women directors are so compassionate for you, and want to avoid you being embarrassed. They want to get it over with for your sake."

Drew has been knocking on studio doors for nearly a decade. Hollywood has been her retreat from her home turf, which she describes as "an uncivilized, middle of nowhere" tiny Southern



town. "Do you know why I chose acting? When I was 5 years old, I was watching cartoons and I told my mother that I wanted to be a 'cartoon girl' when I grew up. She said, 'Sweetheart, those aren't real people.' Then she changed the channel to a soap opera and said, 'But you could be an actress,' and I said, 'Okay. If I can't be a cartoon girl, then



Sex & spiffs payoff in *PHANTOM LOVE* [4] Drew's impassioned scenes with Jamie Johnson [5] "were easy to do because we were directed by a woman, Maria Katsabi. Female directors are compassionate. And it was just wonderful to write those big director and goddess [6] lines like the *Cinderella* of the story."



"I think I'm playing an alien or a goddess. I fall in love with one of the characters and he takes me to another planet, where I become a shopaholic or something..."

I'll be an actress"

Drew realizes that "prosperity" within an industry that prefers body checks over dramatic aptitude is ambiguous. "In my adulthood, when I wonder if I'm a success or not, I'll think about how everyone I went to school with is still living in that little redneck town. So having moved away and made a life for myself is its own success."

Nevertheless, that success is far from what most of her hometown friends envision to be the lifestyle of a Hollywood sex symbol. "Most people there believe that if I'm an actress, I must be living in the Clampetts' mansion or something. But I always tell them, 'Imagine the Osborne and you'd be closer.'"

Though routinely cast as the tantalizer or eye candy, Drew is unconcerned about stereotype: "There will be lots of years where I can play interesting and ugly, but there's only so many years that I can play beautiful. I enjoy capturing how I look today because film is forever. That may be putting too much emphasis on something superficial, but when you put the effort into it that I do—the diet, the exercise—I think you gain a lot spiritually and emotionally. I don't drink, smoke or do drugs. Maybe it is vanity, but if vanity can make you take care of yourself like that, then there are blessings in it."

Drew poses for Linda Tisner, who describes the bombshell as a free spirit, sweet, bubbly, never at loss for dialogue. "We shot at my home & at Venice Beach just before sunset."



# THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING

FULL MOON SHOT A MOVIE THAT IS A 'HAUNTED' HOSPITAL: ONLY THE FILM SURVIVES (ALONG WITH THE CAST, CREW, CRAFT SERVICE)...

BY MITCH PERSONS

Leaning against a morgue wall, my vision—somewhat encumbered by the prosthetic "zombie" glop adhering to my face—is locked on the ceiling. Between takes of Full Moon's *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING*, I reevaluate my future as an actor.

I made my movie de-



but in *PRELUDE*, an Oscar-nominated short subject that debuted in 1966, blank and you'll miss me. I was subsequently cast in the greatest sci-fi epic you never saw: cranked-out on Samm Bell & Howell, it disappeared beneath the cracks. And here I am, 33 years later, making my comeback. I was hoping this role would

DEADLY: T. Wendy Spears on set constructed within deserted hospital. At right: Writer Mitch Persons, posing with director Dave Parker, moonlights as zombie

land me in the same league as Edward Norton, but, as a result of the constraints of my character—I play a corpse—archivists will more likely match me with Eddie Dezen.

To kill some time between camera set-ups, I've chronicled my tenure on this film. I remember it as if it were yesterday, which is pretty improbable because I arrived on the set only nine hours ago...

5:00 PM

On a cloudy, gloomy, unseasonably cold afternoon, I drive up to Loma Linda

Hospital in the Boyle Heights section of Los Angeles. The area has a reputation as being somewhat grungy and violent, but I find it picturesque and placid. I am a bit dismayed, though, by the appearance of the hospital. Apparently bereft of electricity, the joint appears deserted. The grass on the premises, while not an unmanageable tangle, has obviously not been tended for many weeks. I park my car, weave past some trailers and pass a "Condemned" sign that's fastened to the exit door.

The hospital milieu is genuinely creepy, maybe it's

the residual influence of the inclement climate, the darkened, dirty hallways or maybe just how the location viscerally impacts me.

A production assistant leads me to a room to meet screenwriter/director Dave Parker, who approximates the appearance of a youthful Peter Bergmanovich. "This hospital location is something I'm really excited about," says Parker. "It's been abandoned for several years and is only used for film locations. They just shot Schwarzenegger's *END OF DAYS* here, they've shot a couple of *X-FILES* here, the pilot for *K.R.* and now *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING*. The other nice thing about this location is that it's supposedly haunted, which always helps. Walking around at night in a haunted place, especially while you're making a horror movie, is kind of cool."

"The fourth floor is the one that's supposed to be occupied by spirits. I had a couple of friends who were exploring one day. They went up to the fourth floor and, at the nurse's call station, there was one light on and it was for room 436. It





"The DEAD/LIVING crew stayed late to help Denise Duff and me with our photo shoot," says Sean Barrett.

"I insisted on striking this pose, homage to 'vampire movie' posters of the '80s."



was just on by itself. They didn't actually go into the room, no way were they going to do that, but when they went back the next day, the light for 426 was off. By itself, the incident wasn't too significant, but, when you consider the general gloominess of this place, it made my hair stand on end when they told me about it.

"I didn't mind that a bit. It fits right in. *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING* is an out-and-out horror film designed to scare the living hell out of anybody who sees it. I co-authored the story with a good friend of mine, Paul Salomonoff, and when Paul had to take off for other commitments, I wrote the screenplay. This film is almost autographical in a lot of ways, because it's about a renegade group of filmmakers who break into an abandoned hospital to shoot their own horror movie—their own zombie movie—and it's the director's first film. Like me, he's previously done only music videos—and he's working with a small crew. And they're just taking a lot of risks and just kind of going for it, and making the type of movie they love. And the director—again, like me—is a big horror fan.

"While searching the hospital, the crew discovers this lab which has got this amaz-

Jennie Donohue poses for Jon Deen (l) and is visited by *DEAD/LIVING*'s zombie contestants (r). "Part of this is makeup & costume," she says. "and the other part of it is attitude."

ing-looking chamber; it's like a big coffin but it's got a lot of strange markings on it and, when they open it, a man's body falls out. Of course, this freaks-out the crew and everybody wants to leave except David Fec, the movie's director. He is so obsessed and determined to make his movie that nothing's going to stop him. He convinces everyone to actually use the dead body in their zombie movie because nobody's ever used a real corpse in a movie before. They put the body in the machine, which they figure out how to turn on. They think it would light up and look cool, but they end up bringing this corpse back to life and opening this void that unleashes these other zombies.

"The last three-quarters of the movie becomes sort of a survival tale, with the protagonists trying to get out of the hospital. But what they find out is—with this machine turned on—they're stuck in limbo between two worlds, so they can't get out. They have to go back and destroy the machine to be able to get out of the hospital. We twist and turn it. There's no escape."

"This evening, we're shooting quite a bit of zombie stuff. We have a whole morgue set up in the basement here. Our first big scene of the evening—the one you're going to be in, Mitch—is in the morgue's 'Failed Experiments' room. The two leads have barely escaped from a couple of zombies called Maggot and Gaunt, and have gone crawling through a vent. They end up in this room and there's a bunch of dead bodies—and one of them is the wife of the film's main villain. She was his first 'resurrection' experiment. That's the reason the dead are coming back: the villainous Elben, a brilliant MIT kind of radical, was heartbroken when his wife, Ellie, died. As a result, he started to delve into the supernatural, along with his science, to see if he could bring her

**DAVE PARKER, DIRECTOR**

**"We have very attractive women here who I'm sure look wonderful naked. But there isn't any point in the story where nudity would fit in. It's a horror movie, it's not about tits and ass."**



"I love what I do in *DEAD/LIVING*," writes Anna Désormeaux. "I don't look on any of the things I do as gaudy. The physical stuff is part of what I was hired for."

book. She did come back but with less than desirable results. And Ellie, like the other zombies, hates the living because—in her own words—"They live."

"The zombie makeup is phenomenal. We have a fantastic artist, Tom Surprenant, who is just a genius at creating horrific makeup effects. But I have to confess that, being a horror movie fanatic, I always want to have as much blood showing as possible. Every time an actor has to be bloodied up, I insist on doing it myself. I guess I just can't get enough blood on the set. I take that fake blood and splatter and splatter until I'm satisfied. Everybody around here probably thinks I'm a little deranged...deranged, in fact, that they've given me a nickname: 'The Blood Guy.'"

6:00 PM

The Blood Guy tells me that I've been cast as one of the inanimate dead. I suspect this will translate into minimal dialogue. Someone advises me that a makeshift

dressing and makeup room is located on the second floor and, coward that I am, I'm relieved to keep my distance from the fourth floor. Passing through the portal, I see a big, muscular guy frigidly standing as an assistant applies body makeup. He introduces himself—through a facial muscle camouflaging his mouth—as Andre "Doc" Newman, the actor hired to play Maggot. Seated in another chair is a 7'6" human monolith named Matt McGroarty who's cast as Gaunt, Maggot's zombie sidekick. McGroarty is something of a celebrity: he's documented in the Guinness Book of World Records for having "the world's largest feet [size 29 1/2]!" He smiles and welcomes me to "The Dead Zone."

I remove my shirt, sit down in a chair and Surprenant begins to work.

"Our zombie designs are a little bit different than the traditional ones," he says while applying a prosthetic forehead to my real one. "These creatures are very stylized. That's the way

Dave [Parker] wanted them. He said, 'The phony zombies that are in the film-within-the-film should have that stereotypical look, that blue-green skin type. But the real zombies—the ones who chase our hero and heroine around—they're going to be very pale and, well, dead-looking.' Dave is also doing some innovative lighting that is going to bring out the transparency of these creatures' skins to give them that pallid, corpse look and, at the same time, highlight some mottled, shadowed areas which I'm trying to work in. With Matt, I used his naturally high cheekbones and enhanced them so that his face appears very bony, very angular. Then, of course, there are those open, festering sores which should look great on film."

I inquire if all those layers of makeup will affect Gaunt and Maggot's speech. "We don't say much," laughs Newman.

"Except for an occasional grunt or two," adds McGroarty.

7:00 PM

For some reason, there are no mirrors in the makeup room. I shuffle into the men's room to look at Surprenant's handiwork. My face is gray and pitted, my eyes have shrunk into deep, black circles. A small trickle of blood has corroded on the left corner of my mouth. I look very dead.

Walking back into the dressing room, I see a relaxed McGroarty puffing on a cigarette. I'm tempted to deliver a bad joke about nicotine staining his glow, but decide against it. Closely by, the actors who are cast as villains—Matt Stephens ("Dr. Elben") and Ariana Albricht ("Ellie")—are seated on a dusty Naugahyde couch.

"You would think I have the easiest acting job in the world in the scene we're doing tonight," says Albricht. "I'm a dead body on a slab in the morgue and I have to be completely motionless, which means I have to hold

# THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING

## DIRECTING FOR FULL MOON

A SELF-PROFESSED AFICIONADO OF THE HORROR CINEMA, DAVE PARKER IS SAILING HIS ZOMBIE SAGA INTO THE MAINSTREAM.

By MITCH PERSONS

"Since I was a little kid, I've always been interested in horror movies," says Dave Parker, writer/director of *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING*. "It all started with those Famous monsters and KING KONG and all that type of stuff. I was so fascinated by these films that I knew, even at a very young age, that I wanted to make my own horror movies."

"When I was looking for my first intern work, I purposefully sought Full Moon out because I knew they principally made horror movies, and the quality of their productions was very high. I was working there in different capacities for about seven years when I heard about this script being circulated called *The Dead Hate the Living*. The title alone sent chills up my spine. I knew it was something I had to have as my own project. Dave DeCoteau, one of Full Moon's directors who was acquainted with me and my work, went to our producer, Charlene Band, and said, 'If there's anyone who should be doing this movie, it should be Dave Parker. It's time to give him a shot at it.' Luckily, Charlene agreed."

"You've probably noticed that most of Full Moon's movies are twisted, black comedies like *BLOOD DOLLS*, which was released earlier this year. However, *DEAD/LIVING* is much more mainstream in its structure. There is humor in this film,



**DEAD/LIVING** Dave Parker releases Wendy Speakes. "This is an out-and-out horror film," says the director. "It is designed to scare the hell out of viewers."

but the humor comes not from a kinky story but from the interaction of personalities. We start out with all the principals being normal. By the time the film ends, though, everyone—except for the two leads—is a zombie. In *BLOOD DOLLS*, from the very first shot, you realize that this is a film about a harem of strange characters in strange situations. And, of course, there is that very strong element of tongue-in-cheek humor.

"In our film, we play the horror part very seriously, and our zombies are definitely not for comedic relief in any sense. They're totally menacing, and we try to make them look as nasty and brutal as we possibly can. They don't look like the zombies that you might see in, say, a George Romero film. A lot of the zombie designs were inspired by the

game *Resident Evil*. Like the creatures in that game, our zombies look more like strange experiments gone awry than just hollow-eyed corpses coming back from the dead.

"One of our actors, who plays the lead in the film-within-a-film, spends most of the movie walking around with half of his face torn off. That makeup, by the way, is a tribute to a film that really boggled my mind as a kid, *WAR OF THE COLOSSAL BEAST*. What was fun about that makeup is that it's the first time we see this guy; he's completely yellow and jaundiced. We're talking bright, primary yellow. But when he's put into this zombie transfer machine that the villain has invented, he's pasty white with veins—a real nauseating-looking wreck. For the real zombies in the movie, the ones who

are already dead when the story begins, we went with colors that were pale with dark shadows.

"This whole makeup thing has all the actors excited. It's like they're saying, 'We don't have to worry about looking gorgeous and looking great. This is like Halloween time, and we can just play with makeup and just concentrate on the acting.' I think that's very freeing for them and they're really enjoying it."

"All the actors in this movie are troopers. None of them are treating this like, 'Oh, this is just a horror movie.' I think they were all impressed with the script, and saw we actually created individuals who were flesh and blood. That was my main concern in writing this story. At times I thought, 'God, I'm really spending a lot of time giving these people depth, and not a lot of time on action,' but to me it was of the utmost importance to establish personalities that the audience cared about. I think that makes the horror much more effective. My favorite directors are John Carpenter, George Romero, David Cronenberg. I've always noticed that, in their films, they emphasize not the gore and the thunder, but strong character development within their stories. That's what I wanted to do with this film."

"Since this is a movie that puts importance on character, I decided to forgo the temptation of throwing



*Between takes, Wendy Speaks relaxes with zombie assistant. "The actors are troopers," says the director. "None are treating this like, 'It's just a horror film.'*

in gratuitous nudity I think, too, that you leave yourself open for a much higher caliber of actress when she isn't required to take her clothes off. That might be wrong, that might be totally unfair at this level, but I think you get actors more interested in the role when there's not a lot of nudity in it. We have very attractive women here who I'm sure look wonderful naked, but there just isn't any point in the story where nakedness would really fit in, so we didn't do it. This is a horror movie. It's not about tits and ass.

"Actually, what this film is about is me. It is almost 100% autobiographical. The whole film-within-a-film motif is based on things that are drawn out of my own experiences at *Full Moon* as a production assistant, and now as a first-time director. There's one scene that I lifted, almost word-for-word, from something that happened on a project I was working on when I first started here. The director, my alter ego played by Eric Clawson, is waiting for someone to deliver some supplies and he's pacing back and forth. His friend, an effects artist, says, 'Re-

lax, man, it's not like you're making *TITANIC* and every day is costing you \$300,000.' The director replies, 'Don't remind me. If I had just their cappuccino budget, I could make four of these pictures!'

"When I describe this movie to friends, and tell them it's a subjective story about a bunch of horror filmmakers making a horror film, they say, 'Oh, it's like the old Bob Clark/Alan Ormsby cult classic, *CHILDREN SHOULDN'T PLAY WITH DEAD THINGS* or Tom DiCillo's *LIVING IN OBLIVION* with zombies. I suppose it is. But what I'm really trying to do here is make a movie that a group of people can sit down to, have a few beers and have the scare of their lives.

"I consider myself very fortunate on this, my first movie, to have been given great people to work with. I picked a fantastic cast that I'm totally proud of, and my crew is just amazing. The stuff I've been seeing in, in some ways, so much better than I ever envisioned it. This group is making this movie happen just as much as—no, more than—I ever could have dreamed." □

## SARA BARRETT

**"That place definitely had a presence that was not signed onto the project. Neither myself nor Denice Duff could stand to be alone, whether it was a trip to the changing room or bathroom."**

my breath a lot. For anyone else, I imagine it would be easy but I'm an asthmatic, so I really have to take small, shallow breaths while the camera is on me. It's hard work but it's fun."

I ask Stephens how he'll negotiate his all-American wholesomeness with the contrasting anarchy of his mad doc. "They're going to give me hair extensions, a goatee, mustache and contacts which look like I have ectaracts," he grins. "My look is a cross between Rasputin, Dr. Frankenstein and Blackbeard. I actually auditioned for some of the other roles for this film and I happened to fall into this one, which was kind of a long shot because I don't really look like a villain."

### 8:00 PM

Production assistant Sy Rosko comes in and tells me that my scene will be shot around 10:00 p.m. With two hours to blow, I strike up some conversation with my new bud. "I'm a nice zombi," bellows Matt McGrory. He always sounds like he is talking into the world's largest and deepest artesian well. "I don't kill. I just main [laughs]...I'm kidding. I'm kidding." The actor is all too aware of his physical presence. "People look at me," he shrugs, "and they're either curious or afraid of me."

We both stop to stare at a couple of effects people who are unloading what looks like a bloody female cadaver. It's not a pretty sight. Her entire midsection is ripped out, the spleen and backbone are whipping around like lawn sprinklers. The prop guys, who watch my chin drop to the floor, quickly inform me that the

"deceased" is nothing more than a dummy dipped in stage blood.

"...and I usually get asked the same questions over and over," continues an impulsive McGrory, "like 'So how's the weather up there?' I've gotten used to the cracks that aren't as kind. We all get ridiculed from time to time, a guy like me or a midget, even a businessman. There's always somebody out there who's got to make fun of somebody else. It's a lack of confidence on their part. But, for the most part, I find that people are pretty decent and I do make a lot of great friends due to being different."

### 9:00 PM

I am still walking around. Paul Salamoff, Parker's collaborator on the *DEADLIV-ING* story, and Hal Sutin, who will be scoring the mu-

*Amie Donath: "If I have to sitter across gritty, grimy floor tiles, it'll be the best sittering I've ever done."*



sic, heard that I'm in the building and zip upstairs to be interviewed.

"I am doing the main title song," says Satan. "I was supposed to do some background music, but that's still in limbo and I'm probably not even going to wind up doing that. I'm mainly here to just see what's coming down. Dave Parker and I are old buddies. He saw me performing at a club one night, and approached me to do a video for him. The video came off a six-song CD that we did and was called *Tales of Terror*. It's basically ten minutes long, and is about a couple of kids who go visit their uncle and then all kind of mayhem ensues."

"I've known Dave for a long time also," adds Salamoff. "How I came to co-author the story is kind of an interesting yarn. My background, actually, is in makeup effects but I have written many screenplays, none of which were ever produced. When Dave got the assignment from [producer] Charlie Band to direct *DEAD/LIVING*, there was already an existing screenplay. Dave read it and was not pleased with it. He had his own ideas about what he wanted to do, but he really didn't have time to write the script.

"I've had the time of my life making this film," says Jamie Denton (as Eric Cleaver). "The place is creepy."

## DAVE PARKER, DIRECTOR

**"Our film's zombie designs were inspired by *Resident Evil*. Like the creatures in that game, our zombies look more like strange experiments gone awry rather than hollow-eyed corpses."**



Wendy Speake is proof that *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING*. The director notes, "We play 'horror' seriously. Our zombies are definitely not for comedic relief."

so he gave me a call. When I came over to his home, he said, "Here's the idea, Paul. I need to come up with a story and I can't commit to it because I'm busy with other stuff, so here you go. The title is *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING*, and I need a page one rewrite. It can take place in one location, you can have x-number of actors, you can have this many effects, it has to be produced for a certain amount of money and I want this, this and this in it." Then he gave me some brief sketches of plot ideas, like this group of filmmakers in an abandoned place making a movie, and then this real zombie thing going on. I went away for a couple of weeks, and wrote a 25-page treatment based on Dave's concepts. Dave brought it to Full Moon and said, "Look, I know we al-

ready have a script, but this is the movie I want to make," and he sold them on the idea based on that treatment.

"I would have helped write the screenplay also, but Full Moon didn't want to pay me so Dave did it on his own. I'm not upset by that. I was so hot about the project, I would have done it for free, anyway."

### 10:00 PM

Time for my shoot but no one comes to fetch me. I'm restless, so I decide to go downstairs to see what's happening on the set. As I walk down the hallway, I almost literally bump into FF photographer Linda Tinfana, who's assigned to the *DEAD/LIVING* shoot. We developed a sweet working rapport while covering the Gothic Erotic franchise, a division of Full Moon, so I

greet her with a smile. She nearly drops her camera. I draw closer but Linda backs off. Then it dawns on me: I'm a zombie.

"Linda, it's me. Mitch."

"I know it's you. Your face is horrible."

"Linda, it's only makeup."

"I don't like this place," she says, allowing me a quick, cursory handshake.

She's scared. As I relate to Linda that she's not the only soul in the hospital who's unnerved, the tension melts from her beautiful face. I invite her to join me in my downstairs odyssey for the 10 p.m. shoot. Walking two flights down to the basement, which is even more dingy and creepy than the upstairs quarters, we encounter a gofer who holds one finger up to his lips, shorthand for "Shh, we're filming." And then Linda backed into that damn prettifying corpse—the one whose insides spilled were all over the outside. She takes one look at the dummy and, while paraphrasing the late Mantan Moreland ("Peets, do your duty!"), retreats from the premises.

"Where are you going?" I whisper.

"Home," she gulps. "I know that thing is rubber and paint, but it's all the same things—lye, Mitch."

I bear the receding echoes of her footsteps as she's swallowed by the darkness.

(Footnote: Sara Barrett (page 32), photographed in the hospital by Devon Duff, admits, "Denice and I were really freaked out. That place, long rumored to be haunted, definitely had a presence that wasn't signed onto the project. Neither of us could stand to be alone; whether it was on a trip to the changing room, the craft service table or the bathroom, we stuck together like glue. You knew people had died in that hospital and we were disturbing their sleep. I definitely got the feeling that something didn't want us there. Maybe they didn't approve of the

continued on page 32



# THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING

## JAMIE DONAHUE

FORMERLY SENTENCED TO WOMEN-IN-PRISON FILMS, THIS FULL MOON FEMME IS ZAPPING ZOMBIES AND WRITING SCREENPLAYS.

BY CYNTHIA BEACH

Born and raised in Lansing, Michigan, she moved to Tinseltown in pursuit of an acting career. "I studied for a short time at Michigan State before moving out to L.A.," recalls Jamie Donahue. "Then I took classes at the Phil Harman Actor's Workshop. I still take different workshops to stay in tune."

Donahue's initial plum role was in a campy horror pic called *STOP IT, YOU'RE KILLING ME* ([www.themonsterclub.com](http://www.themonsterclub.com)). "It was really hot outside when we shot this film. They picked one of the hottest summers to do it. One day, we were shooting in an apartment with very high ceilings. The walls were all wooden, and it was about 15 degrees hotter inside than it was outside. We had huge candles that weren't lit. Before the crew even turned the movie lights on, they were melting. It was just unbearably hot. The next day, we shot on location in the desert. I was there for about 15 minutes and, suddenly, I passed out. Everybody gathered around me. I felt so awful. It freaked everybody out. I was so embarrassed."

Less of a liability on her debut film was a rendezvous with "Jason," the makeup artist; the couple have been romantically linked during the past five years, though marriage isn't imminent. "I'm really not thinking about any of that kind of stuff right now," says Donahue. "I still want to be a kid for a while."

Turning into a human microwave hardly dissuaded the ingenue from pursuing an acting career in Los Angeles. She proceeded to complete two prison films for Prototype Productions. "The first film I did for them



Jamie Donahue, posing for *Deadly*, is directed by *DEADLY*'s Ross Barrett as "Intelligent & Funny...her 'ugly girl' facade was broken down by the director. And her shoulder. She's a magnet."

was released as *CAGED HEARTS*. I died kind of early in that movie because I didn't take my clothes off. I had a really cool fight scene, it was choreographed really well. But, in the final cut, you can see all the mats on the ground. Now that really ruined it for me. When we were shooting, I asked if they were going to be able to see them, because we could have done the scene without them. They told us that they were going to cut around them but they were in the final version of the film. I did another movie for them called *CELL BLOCK SISTERS*, which is available on video. They didn't have a good stunt coordinator that time. They had me with these girls and they said, 'Just look and punch.' I ended up getting knfed in the head, resulting in a mild concussion."

Heavily injured and editing gaffes aside, the actress continued to audition. She landed a minor part in director Peter Cohen's *WHIPPED*, which was shot in the Big Apple. "I arrived in New York the night before the first day of shooting. The DP and I went out to so many bars that night, and I woke up with this amazing hangover. I went down to where they were shooting. The DP had to be there at seven a.m. He had his sunglasses on and looked like he was just barely making it. But he survived the day. I couldn't believe it."

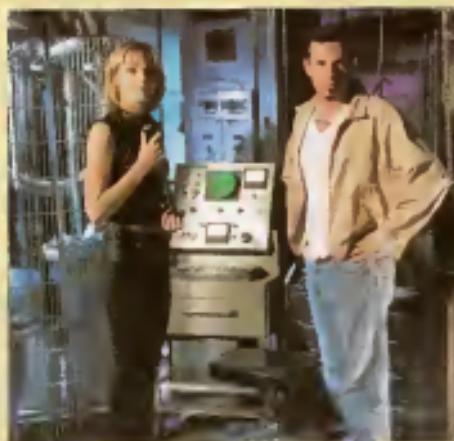
Upon wrapping the movie, Donahue was cast as a pivotal character in *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING*. "I met Dave Badge [Full Moon's pr supervisor] when I was performing in a music video he did. I got killed in the video. I had my brains squeezed out of my head. During the filming of that, he mentioned that he may have a film coming up that he wanted me to read for. The great thing was that I got a chance to read the script before the audition. So many times, you are only given the scenes that the casting directors want you to perform at the audition. You don't know the character's back story, or why they are saying or doing the things that they are. So it was

great to have the opportunity to review the script."

Her admiration for *DEAD's* mischievous director, Dave Parker, is unshakable. "One thing Dave did that was really great was that, after the film had been cast, he took everyone out to dinner so that we all got a chance to get to know each other before the filming began. He helped me keep my energy up

**JAMIE DONAHUE**

**"I died early in *CAGED HEARTS* because I didn't take my clothes off. I had a cool fight scene but, in the final cut, you can see all the mats on the ground. Now that really ruined it for me."**



Donahue busts zombies in *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING* (page 58). She intends to avoid like rules: "I overheard a starlet who was talking about her breast implants & what a great investment they were for her career. You may as well hold a sign over your head that says, 'I can't get my way out of a paper bag!'"



during the shoot. He was always playing little pranks on me to help keep up the suspense, and the fear of supposedly not knowing what was around the next corner. But I don't scare easily. I'm not the typical girl. I love horror films and it takes a lot to scare me. One night, they were in a room and Dave and the crew were pretending they were stuck in there. They pretended to try to open the door, but to no avail. It didn't phase me. I said, 'We're trapped in here?' That's fine, as long as I don't run out of cigarettes.' They got frustrated because they were trying to freak me out, but it wasn't working.

"Finally, Dave ended up succeeding in scaring the hell out of me. We were shooting, and there's a scene where I punch a zombie in the face. We were doing an insert shot of my fist going into the face. They had a fake head that I had to punch through. I knew there was going to be all kinds of slime and goo in it. So I punch my hand through it, and Dave comes over to talk to me. I wasn't really paying much attention to my hand when he was standing there talking to me. Suddenly, something in the head caught my eye and I was like, 'Oh, my God!' Something moved in there!" Dave said, 'Yeah, take a closer look, Jamie.' I looked inside the head, and there were piles of live maggots and crickets. I hate maggots and, come to find out, I'm not so crazy about crickets, either. I started to run away, completely involuntarily. I wanted to be strong about it but I just freaked. The whole crew was laughing. Dave pulled me back into the room and told me I had to put my fist back in there, grab a big handful, and pull it out. I told him, 'I have to know exactly what to do, because I'm only doing this once.' Somebody was right there to wash my hand off after the take. That was the only time I was ever demanding on a set. I had to make sure somebody was going to be there. I felt bad about getting so worked up but then, after shooting, a lot of the guys on the crew were like, 'I



Beverly professes her love for horror films. "It takes a lot to scare me. I'd really like to work with John Carpenter. He scares me as a real actor's director & I like his stories."

can't believe you put your hand back in there. I wouldn't have done it. I really loved working with everyone on that set. Although the shoot was only ten days long, we all seemed to be very closely bonded to each other. Matt (McGroarty), the guy who played the biggest zombie, was so cool. We did one scene in a graveyard where he pulls me down into the ground. I had to kind of climb out of this thing after every take. But, instead of making me climb out, he picked me up around the waist and put me up there like a little doll. He was such a sweetheart."

Off-camera, Donahue is developing some screenplays with her writing partner. "We wrote a film called CRED-



DENCE," she explains. "It's about a Midwestern girl who falls in love with a convicted serial killer. They write letters to each other and she visits him while he is in prison. The couple ends up getting married, with the woman being completely convinced of his innocence. He ends up being released on a technicality and she finds herself faced with the day-to-day life that married people have with each other. She has to decide, during this time, whether she feels he is as innocent as she had been telling everybody.

"After completing CREDENCE, we wrote a film called PATCHMAN BLEAU AND THE DEVIL'S LOVER. The story takes place in 1969 and is set around the lives of carnival performers. A patchman is the guy who stays one town ahead of the carnival to iron things out, and grease the palms of public officials and health inspectors. It's a love story between him and a woman



Donahue shamelessly poses her wack ass for photographer Jon Dorn. Li Registering her fear of live snakes in THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING.

who is a circus freak, billed as 'The Devil's Lover.' Within the culture of the carnival, the circus freaks are the most popular people. The more freakish you were, the bigger star you were. There's even interviews out there with 'alligator boys,' whose skin conditions didn't really get that bad until they were older so, when they were younger, they sort of felt like extra, looking up at these big stars, which were the people who were really freakish.

"Blau, who is just a regular guy, feels like he's not good enough for her because she's a star and he's not. However, the carnival world is changing during this time and people are starting to disapprove of freak shows. The script deals with how the couple is treated within the world of the carnival as well as the outside world. These events transpire during the period when the Vietnam War is taking place."

Donahue has also written BUNNY HOPPERS, which she describes as "really fun. It's a 'feel good' movie about six con men and women whose game of choice is to professionally crash wed-

dings. They go to weddings and make everybody have so much more fun than they would have, and then they proceed to rob them blind. You end up loving the bad guys and rooting for them."

In addition to moonlighting as a screenwriter, Donahue has another goal in the wings. "I'd love to write a play and produce it," she says. "That's something I would do if I could somehow swing it financially. But I plan to continue acting. I would love to work with John Carpenter. I love the way he shoots anamorphically. He strikes me as a real actor's director. And I like the stories he tells. And I'd really like to act with Johnny Depp because he is a completely different character in everything he does. He's a great actor, as opposed to somebody who can carry off playing one character and recycling that character, with maybe a few minor alterations, in every film you see that person in."

Recalling that she forfeited more visibility in CAGED HEARTS because she declined to disrobe, I ask her to opine on obligatory t&a scenes. "I've never done a nude scene. I'm not looking forward to it. I don't know if I'd ever take my clothes off in a film. It's one of those things where my mind kind of changes about it. It would have to be something that I knew I was going to be really proud of. There's a part I'm currently considering that has a couple nude scenes. But I think it really works within the script. Sometimes, if the situation is funny enough, you can pretty much get away with anything. I would do just about anything on screen to generate a good laugh from the audience."

With as much on her plate, how does Donahue maintain a "normal" lifestyle? "Well, acting is definitely my priority right now. Sometimes when I'm shooting, I'm on the set constantly and I really don't have any time to write. Sometimes I do both. That is when I'm reminded of the NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET films as I sit typing. I'm thinking, Don't fall asleep!" □

way we were portraying the audience?"

11:00 PM

As an assistant calls for "Quiet," two actors hit their marks near the gurney. Eric Clawson drops into character, as manicurist film director David Poe, for a close-up. But my attention drifts to Jamie Donahue, a peach-complected, tall blonde in tight, tight, black Levi's; she's cast as Poe's assistant, Topaz. "How I happened to get this job is I did a video with Dave Parker," recalls Clawson during a break, "and from that he wanted me to read for this. It's my first lead."

"As for me," purrs Donahue, "I did one film that...they've changed the title so many times it's difficult for me to remember...oh yes, they're calling it WHIPPED now. It's sort of a swingers-type thing that takes place in New York. I did a couple of 'women in prison' movies, but we can skip over those."

"And those were the good ones," cracks Clawson.

"They were okay," says Donahue, rolling her eyes. "But at least in *THE DEAD HATE THE LIVING* I get to keep my clothes on, which is very nice."

"I am having the time of my life making this film. This place is so creepy. One night after we wrapped, we all had a beer or two. It was like 4:30 in the morning and we start walking through the hospital corridors with just candles, trying to get a feel for this film. What do you call those metal things that they pull the dead bodies out of?"

"You mean the dead body metal things?" deadpans Clawson.

"Well, anyway, those things in the morgue; we actually got into those. Then we went around looking for the morgue. Somebody opened a cupboard and this huge bird, or maybe it was a bat, flew out and scared the shit out of us."

"It's great to have a real place to run around in," con-

## JAMIE DONAHUE

**"I did a couple of women's prison movies, but we can skip those. This place is so creepy. One night after we had a beer or two, maybe 4:30 a.m., we walked corridors with just candles."**



Miss Persons notes, "After all the physical torture, Jamie Donahue (in this Clawson, bracing for a zombie showdown) looks crisp and fresh. She's just emerged from a Park Avenue browseshop & is ready for a zombie walk."

fers Clawson. "It's not like some set where you have to mentally fill-in the blanks. Here it doesn't take much imagination to envision a dark, ominous hospital because you're there."

12:00 AM

I am in the men's room taking a leak when there is a knock at the door. "Mitch," says Sy Rosko, "we're ready for you."

I slip up. Rosko takes me to the set, which is a spotlessly clean storage room, complete with a row of well-stocked cabinets on one wall. The dummy is sitting in a corner, a sheet covering its exposed entrails.

Dave Parker comes over to me. He's pleasant, but is starting to look very fatigued. "Okay, Mitch, we're masking you the main focus of this shot. Here's what's happening. Topaz is crawling around the floor in this darkened room, a cigarette lighter in her hand, looking for a way out of the hospital. She creeps past you, sees

me, Donahue drops the lighter. One heartbeat later, as the camera is still rolling, I hear someone frantically whispering a line that isn't in the script: 'Get the lighter! Get the lighter!' Parker yells, 'Cut!' I look down and see a flame flickering within an eighth of an inch from my trousers. The A.D. grabs the lighter and snuffs it before I'm torched.

1:00 AM

I'm informed that I might be needed for a shot where Poe and Topaz discover Ellis Ethan's body. But everyone breaks for "lunch." In a shelter adjacent to the makeup room, there's a line to the food table that stretches into the hallway. I drop some eggplant parmesan and some salad onto a paper plate and look for a place to sit.

2:00 AM

Returning to the basement for my final scene, I see Ariana Albrecht limping in the hallway. The pretty woman's face is now worm food; her sunken eyes are nearly lost within a cosmetic quagmire of rotting flesh and veins.

"Hi, Arizona!"

"Sorry," she mumbles, "but with all this gunk on, I can hardly see you."

Parker beckons Albrecht to the storage room and advises me that I'm not really needed for this scene. I can go home.

Bonnie Steuch, a production assistant, escorts me out to one of the trailers in the parking lot so I can remove my makeup. She hands me a bottle of alcohol, a soiled rag and my street clothes. After repeated scrubbings with soap and alcohol, the goo finally peels off. Searching for my car, I'm soaked to the skin in a heavy downpour of rain. I take one last look at the hospital which has almost bonded with the darkness; only one shaft of light vaguely beams through the blinding torrent—and its coming from somewhere on the fourth floor.

# Dungeon of Desire

# Amber Newman

A STARLET'S SURVIVAL KIT: EROTIC CABLE, MOVIES SHOT IN FIVE DAYS, SURGERY, SEXY ROBOTS AND SALLY JESSE RAPHAEL.

BY JAKE WOODS

The late hemisbell Lana Turner, according to a Hollywood myth, was "discovered" while seated at the fountain of a Hollywood drug store. And Courteney Cox was initially spotted by the L.A. brass when she gyrated in a Bruce Springsteen music video.

Direct-to-video diva Amber Newman earned 15-minute notoriety in a segment of **THE SALLY JESSE RAPHAEL SHOW**. "Oh yeah, I did that," relates Newman in a breezy, rapid fire voice. "It was a *Why Don't You Give Up Your Sexy Job?* theme show and it was me and my mom, who was pretty upset because I was quitting college to try and break into *Playboy*." Her dramatic education was one of the frills of a soccer scholarship. Newman's mother speculated that her offspring would qualify as a world class athlete who'd eventually compete in a World Cup tournament. But contempt within the family brewed with the tomboy's declaration that she was giving up sports for a crack at Hollywood stardom.



Newman and Michelle Turner in **DUNGEON OF DESIRE**. "It's the most amount of love scenes that I've ever done on film," recalls B-movie director Rachel Gundersen.

"The idea of that Sally show," recalls Newman, "was this athlete had gone and gotten a boob job she had gone all prikey and sexy and broke her mother's heart in the process. Looking back, I get a giggle out of having done it. But, you know, it got me some work. There are still people who remember me from it because Sally was real tough on me and I kept my cool. I think I may be the only actress who ever got her start from one of those shows."

Stardom on the scale of Cox and Turner remains ex-

tremely elusive. Newman pays the rent by landing roles in softcore smogs, including three films—recently cranked-out back to back—that were produced by the low budget franchise, Surrender Cinema. She was also featured in a string of episodes shot for Click Production's **SEX FILES 2** and **SCANDAL**, a couple of cable series that are light on plot and heavy on jiggie.

Newman links her baptism into T&A commerce to her friendship with fellow Ohio native, Lorissa McCormas, a starlet whose track

record includes the likes of **KILLER SEX QUEENS FROM CYBERSPACE** and **CAGED WOMEN II**. Lorissa knew some people who were doing a movie called **VAMPS: DEADLY DREAM-GIRLS**, recalls Newman. "It was shot-on-video, but even that was a big deal in Cincinnati, and I was thrilled when they wanted me to play a lead role." Flying to the West Coast less than five months later, the ingenue earned occasional revenue, with an episode of **EROTIC CONFESSIONS** and a minor role in **LAP DANCING**, the latter starring McCormas.

To sustain her survival in L.A., Newman moonlighted as a bikini/lingerie model and strip club waitress. Upon returning to the East Coast for a visit, she attended New Jersey's bi-annual Chiller Theatre Convention. The guest roster included veterans of sci-fi and horror films, in addition to B-queens Michelle Bauer and Linnea Quigley: both actresses were previously united in a myriad of films, including **NIGHTMARE SISTERS**, **HOLLYWOOD CHAINSAW HOOKERS**, **BEVERLY HILLS GIRLS**,



"I wasn't clear on who he was at the time. But I finally met him and he just sat and stared at me. So I'm thinking, 'Oh great, this guy hates me.'"

SORORITY BABES IN THE SLIMEBALL BOWL-A-RAMA, VIRGIN HIGH, DOCTOR ALIEN, ASSAULT OF THE PARTY NERDS I & II, etc. "I was watching Linnea and Michelle," recalls Newman, "and I thought, 'Wow, these people have a following. Wouldn't it be great to have fans like that?'"

Friends at the convention urged Newman to rendezvous with guest speaker Jess Franco, a prolific director of no-budget films when cultists have dismissed as a

Newman & Sheila Foran in *Dungeon of Desire*. The Surrender Cinema release hit video stores October 16



practitioner of on-screen misogyny (sample SADOMANIA, PORNO POP, EU-GENIE: HER JOURNEY INTO FEVERSON, et al.). He was accompanied by spouse Lisa Romay, whom Franco had routinely cast as a victim in his sex/horror quickies (sample BARBED WIRE DOLLS and LADY POENO). Newman beard a rumor that the director was passing a casting call for something that he would be shooting in Spain. "I wasn't really clear on who he was at first," she shrugs, "but I went upstairs to meet him and he just sits and stares at me. I'm thinking, 'Great, just great. This guy hates me.' I was just so embarrassed that I left, and I practically punched the people who had told me to go see him."

About an hour later, Newman's humiliation and hostility abated when she was greeted by a messenger. "Someone came and called out my name, saying that Jess Franco was upstairs asking for me. I went back up and he told me that he wanted to cast me as his 'Paula.' He said he didn't even want to see anything I'd done because it would ruin his image of me. Two weeks later, I was in Spain shooting TENDER FLESH." Newman supported sex goddess Moisique Parent, who's better known on her home turf for roles as a sultry seductress (DARK SECRETS, DEAN QUIGLEY, SWEET-HEART MURDERS, et al.).

Newman encroached in a couple of other Franco films, where she developed an acquaintanceship with ensemble players Michelle Bauer and Linnéa Quigley. "I hate to put it this way," says the starlet, "but Michelle was like my mother. Linnéa, too. They helped me out so much. When I went to Spain the first time, I was 19 and there by myself, really. The second time, Michelle and Linnéa sat me down and really gave me a talking to. Michelle would tell me things she'd learned from [director] Fred Olen Ray,



Newman and Shannon Malone in TIMEGATE: TALES OF THE SADDLETRAMPS. ("It's awesome!"). The film's score master was Michelle Bauer as "Miss Marla."

and it was always some pretty cool stuff. I learned so much from both of them that you could never learn in any acting school. The following year, when I returned to Chiller Theater, all three of us—Michelle, Linnéa and I—were in the same room and that's when I realized that I now had my own little following, which was kind of weird but really neat. I get fan mail and people send me things for my birthday."

She describes Jess Franco as "a hard director. He'll yell at you, and I got yelled at a lot. The most incredible thing about Jess is that you don't shoot one thing until he says to: it's rehearse, rehearse, rehearse. He'll work all day on one scene because it isn't costing him any film. Then, when he shoots it, we nail it in one take. You may do one more for safety, but there's just no need to do more."

"At first, it was very odd for me. Since it was just a rehearsal, I would just give a half effort. Just enough to

let him know I knew the dialogue. That was one of the places where he and I had a problem because he would say, 'I want 100% every time, I want to see it exactly the way you are going to do it,' and I'd say, 'Well then, we've got a problem because I may not do it the same every time.' Then he'd say, 'Oh, yes, you will.' I learned to do it his way real quick."

Newman subsequently applied her experience to a trio of films ground-cut by Surrender Cinema, the company's product is ostensibly "sexy science fiction" (the sci-fi is limited to props—a spaceship or hughes virtual reality technology—that are hung-on to a surfeit of sex scenes). "My run with Surrender was recent and quick," says Newman. "I started in PLEASURE CRAFT and then I did TIME GATE: TALES OF THE SADDLETRAMPS and then straight into DUNGEON OF DESIRE."

Her role in PLEASURE CRAFT isn't especially sig-

nificant. "I'm one of three robot characters... pleasure droids I guess you'd say, and they're made to serve men," she giggles. "It was a cute part, but nothing incredible." However, she gauges TIMEGATE as "Awesome! I played Evie, who was the villainess, and I really enjoyed that. I work in a whorehouse in the old West, and two girls from the '90s accidentally travel back in time and find themselves working in this brothel. My character doesn't like them because one of them is hitting on the sheriff, and I want him, so I try to frame them. Amy Lindsay, Kim Yates and I have the main roles. Dan Golden directed it, who is a great guy I really liked working with."

"It's funny, because I'm the nice girl in PLEASURE CRAFT, the bad girl in TIMEGATE and then back to the nice girl for DUNGEON OF DESIRE. It's great to get a chance to play that kind of range in such a short period of time."

Indeed, the Surrender Cinema films are hardly afforded production extravagance. Newman recounts that each of the movies, which are perpetually played-out on late night cable, are shot within five to seven days: "The crew are so used to what they are doing. They really have it down to a science! We work long hours but they make it easy and fun. You end up where you want to work hard for them because they are good people and, when it's done, they give you something for your reel that you can be proud of."

Newman is particularly psyched over her appearance in an episode of BLACK SCORPION, a TV series produced by Roger Corman. "It's called Life's A Gas. Actually, my part isn't that large but I felt very lucky to be in it. Julie McCullough [Julie" on TV's GROWING PAINS] is a scientist who gets this chemical spilled on her, and it turns her evil and gives her the power to (dis)charge this

**"My run with Surrender Cinema was quick. I was one of three robots—pleasure droids—made to serve men. It's cute but nothing incredible."**

toxic mist. She's out to kill Black Scorpion. That's the show, every week, somebody who's out to kill Black Scorpion and rule the world." Newman and Tracey Bingham (*BAYWATCH*) play Vapor and Mist, McCullough's henchwomen.

While *BLACK SCORPION* uses pyrotechnical effects and cleavage to draw the requisite adolescent audience, Newman admits her role required nominal physical training. "All my action scenes were handled by my stunt double," she says. "Well, except for a few close-ups for my fight scenes. I did get to beat up Scott Valentine. He gets beat up in just about every episode, so I got my turn."

Summarizing her career, Newman insists that she's "very lucky. I've got to work for Roger Corman, who discovered some of the biggest stars ever. I'm proud of the B-movies I've done, and I'm proud to be a working actress. There are a lot of possibilities today for an actress, and I really don't care what I work in—film, TV, video—I just want to be able to work on my craft."

Scanning down Sunset Boulevard, Newman's absorbed into a clutter of generically pretty women. There's a legion of Amber Newmans on every block and "erotic cable" is a euphemism for survival. Welcome to Hollywood. □



**DUNGEON OF DESIRE.** Newman (l) and Stella Porter (r) interview w/ Surrender ensemble player Mist (c). "The biggest challenge was shooting the film in five days," says the director.

# Sita Thompson Cannes Goddess

A BELLE'S BOUNTIFUL YEAR: BOB RAFELSON, MICHAEL MADSEN, GO-GO DANCES, STRIPEASERS, A PROBLEM-PLAGUED WESTERN.

BY DAN SCAPPEROTTI

Cannes, the French Riviera movie Mecca; producers and directors annually convene on its beaches to frolic in the Mediterranean, cavort among a bevy of tanned starlets, and negotiate those megabuck distribution deals. Sometimes the foreign markets generate as much revenue, they can rejuvenate a studio hundred-million-dollar product that fell on hard times. Stateside can be pushed into the black on studio accountant's ledgers. Into this gaiety walked Sita Thompson, who was introduced not only to the glitz and glamour but a darker side of the industry.

While vacationing in Europe, Thompson joined the Aris Productions entourage that was pitching *THE THIEF AND THE STRIPPER*. While her days were spent water-skiing, jet-skiing and soaking up the Mediterranean sun, Thompson also found time to spend a couple of nights with a French family she had lived with as a student during a spring semester. The nights, of course, are spent hobnobbing with the industry elite at extravagant or intimate parties. Thompson occupied



Seen in El Paseo, Thompson was "raised on the road. My father was a hippie turner who rebelled against the western world. I have a hippie background."

a room with another actress at the Hotel du Cap, a \$1500-a-night lodging where the biggest names in the industry hang their hats while visiting the festival. "The hotel overlooks the ocean and it has beautiful gardens," she raved.

The lush environment was recuperation for a very busy past year. Earlier in the season, Thompson was cast in *HARD TIME*, a TNT movie directed by its star, Burt Reynolds. She was initially up for the role of Lupe, but "didn't look Spanish enough." She subsequently auditioned as "the fitness girl," but "I wasn't nearly buff enough," laughed Thompson. "The girl was supposed to be big enough to intimidate men. When I found out that a black American Gladiator got the role, I clearly understood why I wasn't cast." She had no sooner landed a role as a policewoman when there came another change. A small day role was added and director David Carr decided to hire Thompson. The problem was she was visible as one of the four cops on the film. "[The producers] decided to keep me hidden in scenes, related to the cop role, that we'd later film." As a result of the casting



**"I'm currently developing a treatment for a film. I want the comedy to take the forefront... even though there'll be cleavage and stuff."**

modifications, Thompson found herself walking on a beach in a stunning Hotskins black batwing suit. "Burt Reynolds' character is sitting on a beach reading," she recounted. "He looks over and sees me from far away, running to him with a big smile on my face. I'm in slow motion getting closer. He's happy. Then I pass him right by, only to give all my adoring attention to his 250-pound Saint Bernard dog just to the left of his beach. And working with Burt was fun."

She was also featured in a couple of westerns. *SIX GUN WOMEN*, currently in post-production was hampered with disasters that would have sunk other films. There was a lead that didn't work out, hatches of ruined film and a dwindling budget. The role of Lona, the leader of a band of "villainous outlaw-whores" was

*L*: A former spokesperson for Hotskins, Thompson modeled for Malibu Swimsuit and L'Orée Body Gear. *R*: Cast in *WINDOWS OF THE HEART*.





**"Michael Madsen told me, 'If you played the stripper in this movie, I'd rent it every day of the week.' I mean, he just zoned right in on me!"**

recast with Thompson. Part of the film was shot on a Mexican ranch that's owned by Thompson's father.

Cast in *ROWDY GIRLS*, another sagebrush saga, Thompson supported Shannon Tweed, Julie Strain and Deanna Brooks, the latter a *Playboy Playmate* (May '96). She describes the executive producer, India Allen (*Playmate of the Year*, 1987), as "a very, very down-to-earth woman. She's been married for nine years and has two kids." Thompson plays Mrs. Wheeler, a less-than-chaste woman who's amorously involved with the sheriff's brother. One role wasn't enough for Thompson, who donned a long black wig and played one of the hookers seated on the front porch of

"My career is jinxing," says Thompson, who was cast in *THE CLICK* and *BUTTERSCOTCH*, each a sexy sci-fi series tailored for cable. In *Pumpkin*, up-and-coming in *GUN WOMEN*,



the local brothel.

Several months later, when *THE THIEF AND THE STRIPPER* was in pre-production, Thompson was up for the lead of June, but the producers, looking for name recognition, opted for Emmy-winner Roxanne Zehl. Thompson was cast as June's best friend and confidante. "There's a scene where June comes to my house," she recalled, "and I have to teach her how to strip because she has to go on that night." Michael Madsen plays Jimmy Dee, owner of the hottest strip club in town. When an ex-private investigator comes across a big chunk of mob money, he tries to extort some loot from the club. A desperate Dee asks June, one of the strippers, for help but she wants a piece of the action.

"The whole film happens in 24 hours," noted Thompson. "It's kind of like *INTO THE NIGHT* with Michelle Pfeiffer. We only had Michael Madsen for a couple of days on the film, so we had to shoot real fast on the Madsen days. The first day I was doing this little thing with him at the bar. I didn't know much about him at all. I read his book of poems, which I would say are a little denigrating to women. But he comes up and he's really down to earth, cool, and we shake hands and he asked if I played the stripper. I said, 'No, I was up for it, and it was real close, but the producer felt much safer going with the name.' He said, 'Fuck that. If you were the stripper, I'd rent the movie every day of the week.' I was deep red inside but I didn't show it. Then he said, real low, 'Damn, you have nice legs.' I was looking around to see if anybody heard, but he's real good with that controlled voice. I didn't know what to say. I felt pinned up against a wall. So I just said 'Thanks.' He said, 'You know, you really should strip. You'd look so good.' I didn't even look good that day. It was early, my hair was tied back in a



*THE THIEF AND THE STRIPPER*: Thompson ("More strippers!"), pictured w/ Michael Madsen and Robert Zehl, volunteered to expand the movie's boudoirs.

pony tail and I'm not looking sexy or anything. I mean, he just sensed right in on me. I felt exposed or something. He asked me about my background and my dad, my jewelry and stuff; interesting questions that were mixed up with a bunch of sexual innuendos, which weren't insulting or anything but made me feel that he was saying so much in such a little amount of time. I totally understand why this guy is a star. He's a man's man and, for some reason, he has this way of making women fall in love with him. It was like a crush in the seventh grade. You have fun watching him. It's inspiring and stimulating. He made me a fan. I met the writer of his next film at AFM and I asked him if he could write me in, or consider me to play his girlfriend or his ex-girlfriend, or even the girl that he kills or even his sister. *Burn, let me be the waitress.*"

Sitting in on the dailies, Thompson told the producer that although Zehl agreed to strip, she was less than enthusiastic about performing in the buff. The producer asked her for some input. "More strippers," suggested Thompson. The actress got on the phone with three of her friends and, presto!, assembled a striptease troupe. "I've never actually been a stripper," she said. "They

needed more strippers because, even though Roxanne won an Emmy, she doesn't have any sex appeal. So I did a strip. All the girls in the movie who are dancers are not dancers in real life. They're pretty model girls."

Shifting to TV, Thompson played a plus guest role on *The Inferno* episode of Showtime's *MADAM WINSTON'S SECRETS*. "I have the lead of *Tracy*," she explained. "It's about a college girl who's doing a thesis on the prostitution and degradation of women in modern society. She decides to go undercover and really see what it's like for these girls, and finally figures out that it's freedom of choice. By the time she finishes, she's not so pompous about the whole prostitution thing. Through her trials and tribulations she justifies her realization that it's okay, I guess."

Back in 1989, author Robert Parker (*Spenser*) dusted-off an unfinished Raymond Chandler story and turned it into *Poodle Springs*. Almost a decade later, James Caan played Philip Marlowe in an adaptation of the novel that was produced for HBO. Thompson auditioned with twenty other applicants for the role of a go-go dancer. "I didn't know who [director] Bob Rafelson was or anything about him. I just knew he had picked my picture to go

down there. He asked everyone to briefly tell him what their dancing experience was. We all had to do a number. There were girls there from the films *SHOWGIRLS* and *STRIPTEASE*, and one girl worked at *Crazy Girls*. I was the only one who hadn't even been in a strip bar."

I said to him, "I have to be very honest with you, Mr. Rafelson, I have never stripped. I'd be honored to be in your movie and I'd really go up there and dance on that pole, because if there's one thing I know how to do it's move my hips." He put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Okay you guys. Thank you very much." Then he told me to go into wardrobe and "Be back tomorrow at 10AM." I got it! I was really surprised. There were some really good dancers there and I don't know what he liked about me. I didn't ask him, I just took the part."

A \$6 million African gem is the target of a crime syndicate in *LOVE SPELL*, a mystery thriller directed by J.J. Wilson. Thompson plays Nina Siegel, a woman in love with the Beverly Hills billionaire doctor who owns the jewel. "Our characters used to have a relationship," said Thompson, "but he falls head over heels for this Anna Savoy character, and she's just part of a much bigger organization that's trying to acquire this jewel. I help break open the plot, and expose this woman that I knew from the beginning was just bad news. *LOVE SPELL II* was filmed right after that and I'm in both of them."

While filming *THE THIEF AND THE STRIPPER*, a producer told Thompson "that it's all a matter of putting myself on the map." The advice prompted the actress to try her hand at writing a script. "I can use all my friends and my old college campus. I want comedy to take the forefront," smiled the actress, "even though there will be cleavage and stuff." □



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# LETTERS

## SOPHIA CRAWFORD

Dear Jules Woods,  
I'd long wondered whatever became of Sophia Crawford, who made such a memorable impression in a series of Hong Kong martial arts film classics and, not least, that wonderful video, **TOP FIGHTERS 2: DEADLY CHINA DOLLS**, where she appeared as intelligent, cultured and funny. Well, many thanks for your great article about her in 8/98. It was enjoyable first to look—and as much for the peace as for the pass, no mean feat!

Robert S. Wechert  
Colby College  
Waterville, ME

## FAUST: "TOO STRONG" FOR FF READERS?

Seven years ago—back in **FF** 2/92—Brigitte Stevens wrote about a proposed movie adaptation of the provocative comic book, **FAUST**. Back then, the property was even "too controversial for Madonna," who declined to participate. Is a **FAUST** flick stillibernating?

Joey Elliott  
Yorktown, VA

I'm currently working with **FAUST** co-creator/screenwriter David Quian here in L.A. (Quian, who's from Ann Arbor, Michigan, is an infamous comic book writer). The role of Claire, the Devil's whore in the movie, will be played by beautiful Spanish theatre actress/television personality Monica Van Campen (six feet tall with a beautifully proportioned body). She flew into L.A. yesterday, it's her first visit to America. Monica is, at this moment, undergoing an 8-hour full-body cast at the studio of fx artist Screaming Mad George. She will spend the movie plotting against her master, M (Mephistopheles), in incredibly sexy and revealing costumes (this all culminates in a twisted S&M scene where, as a dominatrix, Claire tortures the lead, Jade, to prepare her for the orgasmic satanic ritual finale—Rite of Red Giving).

The body cast at Screaming Mad George's studio is needed for an fx scene where M punishes Claire (after she has

killed a man while seducing him); various parts of her body generate into an impossibly sexy state when M touches them—she's the living image of Lust. Of course, it doesn't stop there. Claire becomes too voluptuous, like an overripe tomato, and continues to develop in the grotesque finale where she is little more than eyes impossibly in distorted, owing flesh.

Have I piqued the interest of *Femme Fatales*, yet? Maybe this is a little too strong for your readers.

Hell's gore  
(and twisted erotica),  
Brian Yano, e-mail

(Erotic filmmaker Brian Yano is no stranger in controversy. As a director, his work includes **SOCIETY**, **BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR**, **THE DENTIST** and **THE PROGENY**, the latter a sci-fi polemic that is uniquely a "woman's movie" but not a chick flick (starring performances by Julianne Moore). He also produced **RE-ANIMATOR**, **TICKS**, **NECRONOMICON**, **FROM BEYOND**, et al. Mr. Yano's horror imagery yields to the ed, with surreal, unvarnished sexual abstractions; we suspect that film historians will parallel the films of Yasujiro Ozu and David Cronenberg. Check-out one of next year's FF issues for coverage of **FAUST**!)

**EATING L.A. STARLETS**  
Thanks for your interviews with actresses who are not easily allied with the Fantasy Cinema but rule models as well (Carrie Fisher, Denise Duff, Pam Grier, Asia Argento, Gilian Anderson, et al). I'm also envious with your representation of "action heroines" (the photo spread on **MARTIAL LAW's** Kali Hu, 7/15, was voluminous). Which brings me to near **FF**. I loved the photos/art of Julie Strain as an animated F.E.A.K. E. Ditts the preview of the movie's cells (though I wish Simon Bisley could've illustrated every frame).

Two questions: (1) What's happening with the same issue's centerfold Lisann De-



Check out Claire Stansfield in a forthcoming issue. The actress, who's cast in *Eating All in Xena*, is posing for *FF* phasing Denise Duff

Yan, the tasty sci-fi model? I'd love to see this path hellmost-clad hotty in the soap—literally! *Yum!* (2) When will **GUNS / CHUPACABRA** be released? To my knowledge, this kinky indie (Julie Strain vs. mythical monsters that eat L.A. starlets) has been in post-production for over one year.

Grace Levy  
Novato, CA

(Lisann DeVos has been incommunicado with her fans as a result of a leg injury, she's recovering and has been cast in a Florida-based sci-fi film, "One Jackson, director of **GUNS / CHUPACABRA**, insists the film "will have its world premiere at the American Film Market (Santa Monica, CA) in March 2000.")

**XENA**  
The **XENA** issue (8/6) is classic **FF** lava-hot photos (especially sexier sex kitten Sheen Rapport, her production diary was a hot) matched by insightful interviews with Lucy Lawless, Alexandra Tydingco...especially Claire Stansfield as a standout, with her hilarious recollections of her B-movies. How about a cover story on that sumptuous sorceress?

Tom Finlayson  
Ontario, Canada

(Earlier this month, actress/photographer Denise Duff posed Stansfield for a *FF* spread that will be published in early 2000.)

## FAN CLUBS

Send self-addressed and stamped envelopes, if you wish a reply.

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